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## H I S T O R Y

O F T H E

RISE and PROGRESS

O F

P O E T R Y,

Through it's several SPECIES.

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*Written by Dr. BROWN.*

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— *Fuit hac Sapientia quondam,  
Publica privatis secernere, sacra prophanis;  
Concubitu prohibere vago; dare jura Maritis;  
Oppida moliri; leges incidere ligno.  
Sic honor & nomen divinis Vatribus atque  
Carminibus venit.*—

H O R.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**I**T is thought proper to inform the Purchasers of the "*Dissertation on the Rise, Union, &c. of Poetry and Music,*" that the Substance of *this* Volume is contained in *That* ; which is now thrown into the present Form, for the Sake of such classical Readers as are not particularly conversant with Music.



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T H E  
HISTORY, &c.

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SECTION I.

*The* DESIGN.

WHATEVER is founded in such *Passions* and *Principles* of Action, as are *common* to the whole *Race* of *Man*, will be most effectually investigated, as to its *Origin* and *Progress*, by viewing *Man* in his *savage* or *uncultivated* State. Here, before Education and Art have cast their Veil over the human Mind, its various Powers throw themselves out, and all its Workings present themselves instantly, and without Disguise.

It may be affirmed with Truth, that, for Want of beginning our Inquiries at this early and neglected Period, and by  
B viewing

viewing Man under his State of *Civilization* only, many curious and interesting Questions have been left involved in Darkness, which might have been clearly unfolded by a free and full Research into the Passions, Propensities, and Qualities of *savage* Man.

This the Writer hopes to make appear in a more *extensive Degree*, and on Subjects of *higher Importance*, through the Course of a future Work [a]; of which, some of the Principles here delivered will make an incidental Part. In the mean Time, he intends to treat the present Subject in the Way now proposed, by deducing *the History of Poetry* through its several Periods and Progressions, from the first great and original Fountain of *savage Life and Manners*: This Work is not designed as a mere *historical Deduction* of *Facts*; but chiefly as an *Investigation* of the *Causes* that *produced* them..

[a] The Work advertised at the End of this Volume.

## S E C T. II.

*Of Melody, Dance, and Poem, in the savage State.*

BY examining savage Life, where untaught Nature rules, we find that the agreeable *Passions* of Love, Pity, Hope, Joy, and Exultation, no less than their *Contraries* of Hate, Revenge, Fear, Sorrow, and Despair, oppressing the human Heart by their mighty Force, are thrown out by the three Powers of *Action*, *Voice*, and *articulate Sounds*. The *Brute* Creatures express their *Passions* by the two first of These; some by *Action*, some by *Voice*, and some by *both* united: Beyond these, *Man* has the added Power of *articulate Speech*: The same Force of *Association* and *Fancy*, which gives him *higher Degrees* and a *wider Variety* of *Passion*, gives rise to this *additional Power* of expressing those *Passions* which he feels.

Among the few *Savages* who are in the *lowest Scale* of the human Kind, these several Modes of expressing their *Passions* are found altogether suited to their wretched State. Their *Gestures* are *uncouth* and *hor-*

*rid*: Their *Voice* is thrown out in *Howls* and *Roarings*: Their *Language* is like the *Gabbling of Geese*.

But if we ascend a Step or two higher in the Scale of savage Life, we shall find this *Chaos of Gesture, Voice, and Speech*, rising into an agreeable *Order and Proportion*. The natural Love of a *measured Melody*, which *Time and Experience* produce, throws the *Voice* into *Music*, the *Gesture* into *Dance*, the *Speech* into *Verse or Numbers*, as we shall see more at large below. The Addition of musical *Instruments* comes of Course: They are but *Imitations* of the human Voice, or of other natural Sounds, produced gradually by frequent Trial and Experiment.

Such is the Generation and natural Alliance of these three *Sister-Graces*, *Melody, Dance, and Poem*, which we find moving Hand in Hand among the savage Tribes of almost every Climate.

For the Truth of the Fact, we may appeal to most of the Travellers who describe the Scenes of uncultivated Nature: All these agree in telling us, that *Melody, Dance, and poetic Song*, generally make up the ruling Pastime, adorn the Feasts, compose

compose the Religion, fix the Manners, strengthen the Policy, and even form the future Paradise, of savage Man. That having few Wants, and consequently much Leisure, the barbarous Tribes addict themselves to these alluring Arts with a wonderful Degree of Passion, unless where their Manners are corrupted by an incidental Commerce with the Off-scum of civilized Nations. By these attractive and powerful Arts they celebrate their public Solemnities ; by these they lament their private and public Calamities, the Death of Friends, or the Loss of Warriors : By these united, they express their Joy on their Marriages, Harvests, Huntings, Victories ; praise the great Actions of their Gods and Heroes ; excite each other to War and brave Exploits, or to suffer Death and Torments with unshaken Constancy.

These are the Circumstances most *common* to the savage Tribes : Besides these, there are many *peculiar* Modes, which arise from their different Climates, Situations, Opinions, Manners. Among some Tribes the *joyous* Passions, among some the *gentle*, among others the *ferocious*, pre-

dominate and take Place. To give all the Varieties of these savage and festal Solemnities, were an endless Labour. Let the following Account suffice as a general Image of the rest; which is singled out, not only because it is the most circumstantial; but likewise for the particular Relation which it will be found to bear to a following Part of this Inquiry.

The IROQUOIS, HURONS, and some less considerable Tribes, are free and independent Savages, who inhabit the northern Continent of AMERICA; and extend their Settlements from the Back of the *British Colonies* to the Borders of the *Great Lakes*, along the Skirts of LOUISIANA, and down the River OHIO, towards the MISSISSIPPI, and the Gulph of FLORIDA. Father LAFITAU [b] gives the following Description of their *festal Solemnities*; which it is necessary to transcribe at large, in order to give an adequate Idea of their Manners and Character.

“ On the appointed Day, early in the  
 “ Morning, they prepare the Feast in the  
 “ Council-cabin, and there they dispose all

[b] *Mœurs des Sauvages*, tom. ii. p. 213, &c. 12<sup>mo</sup>.

“ Things for the Assembly.—In the mean  
 “ time a public Crier goes through the  
 “ Village, and gives Notice, that the *Ket-*  
 “ *tle* is hung on in such a Cabin: The  
 “ common People, and even the Chiefs,  
 “ bring with them their *little Kettle*. It  
 “ doth not appear, that there is any Dis-  
 “ tinction of Ranks among them, except  
 “ that the *old Men* occupy the foremost  
 “ Matts. The IROQUOISE *Women* assist  
 “ not, that I know of, at these Kind of  
 “ Feasts; nor are they invited. The *Chil-*  
 “ *dren*, and *young Men*, who are not as  
 “ yet chosen into the Body of Warriors,  
 “ mount upon the Scaffolds which are  
 “ placed over the Matts, and even upon  
 “ the Roof of the Cabin itself, and look  
 “ down through the Hole at which the  
 “ Smoke goes out.

“ While the Assembly is forming, He  
 “ who makes the Feast, or He in whose  
 “ Name it is made, *sings alone*.—The De-  
 “ sign of this is to entertain the Company,  
 “ on such Things as have Relation to the  
 “ Subject on which they assemble. These  
 “ *Songs*, for the most Part, are filled with  
 “ the *Fables* of *ancient Times*, the *heroic*  
 “ *Deeds* of their *Nation*; and are composed  
 “ in

“ in an *antiquated Style* ; so old, that often  
 “ they understand not what they say.  
 “ The Singer hath some Times an As-  
 “ sistant, who relieves him when he is  
 “ fatigued : For, they sing with all their  
 “ Force.

“ The Speaker then opens the Scene, by  
 “ asking in Form, if all who are invited  
 “ are come. He then names the Person  
 “ who makes the Feast, he declares the  
 “ Occasion on which it is made, and enters  
 “ into a particular Detail of all that is in  
 “ the Kettle. At every Thing which he  
 “ names, the whole Choir replies by a re-  
 “ peated Shout of Approbation.

“ The Speaker then gives an Account  
 “ of every thing, which it is of Importance  
 “ that the Public should know. For these  
 “ *Song-Feasts*, being made on all *weighty*  
 “ *Occasions* which regard the *Village* or the  
 “ *Nation* ; this is the proper Time for pub-  
 “ lic Affairs, as that of renewing a *Name*,  
 “ hearing *Ambassadors*, or *proclaiming War*  
 “ by *Song*.

“ When the Orator hath done speaking,  
 “ sometimes they begin to eat before they  
 “ sing, that they may have the better Spi-  
 “ rits : Sometimes they sing before they  
 “ eat



“ eat : If the Feast is to continue for the  
 “ whole Day, the Kettle is in Part emp-  
 “ ty’d in the Morning, and in Part re-  
 “ served for the Evening ; and in the In-  
 “ tervals they *sing* and *dance*.

“ The Master of the Feast touches no-  
 “ thing. He busies himself only in see-  
 “ ing that the Company be served, or in  
 “ serving them himself ; naming aloud  
 “ the Pieces which he destines and pre-  
 “ sents to each. The best Morfels are  
 “ given by Way of Preference, to those  
 “ whom he chuseth to distinguish.

“ After the Repast, the Master of the  
 “ Feast, begins the *Athoutront*, a *Song* and  
 “ *Dance* peculiar to the *Men*. They re-  
 “ lieve each other, by beginning with  
 “ those of *most Consideration*, and passing  
 “ gradually down to the *Youngest*. They  
 “ have that Civility and Attention to each  
 “ other, that every one waits till another  
 “ of superior Dignity enters the Lists, and  
 “ takes the Lead.

“ The *Ancients* and Men of Dignity  
 “ often do no more than *rise* from their  
 “ Seats ; and content themselves, while  
 “ they *sing*, with making some *Inflexions*  
 “ with their Head, Shoulders, and Knees,  
 “ in

“ in order to *accompany* and *sustain* their  
 “ *Song*. Others somewhat less grave, take  
 “ a few Steps, and walk along the Cabin  
 “ around the Fires. Every one hath his  
 “ particular *Song* ; that is, an *Air*, to  
 “ which he *adjusts* a very few *Words*,  
 “ which he repeats as often as he pleaseth.  
 “ I have observed, that they even *retrench*  
 “ or *strike off* some *Syllables* from their  
 “ Words, as if they were *Verses*, or mea-  
 “ *sured* Words, but *without Rhyme*.

“ He who means to dance, begins by  
 “ rising from his Matt ; and the whole  
 “ Company answers him by a general  
 “ Shout of Approbation : As he passeth  
 “ along before every Fire, they who sit  
 “ on each Side *beat* the *Measure* or *Cadence*  
 “ of his *Song* by a correspondent Motion  
 “ of the Head ; and by throwing out con-  
 “ tinual Shouts which they redouble at  
 “ certain Times, where the Measure de-  
 “ mands it, with so much Truth, that  
 “ they never err ; and with such a De-  
 “ licacy of Ear, as the *French*, who are  
 “ most practised in their Customs, cannot  
 “ attain to. When he passeth to a second  
 “ Fire, They of the first take Breath :  
 “ They of the more distant Fires are like-  
 “ wise

“ wife silent : But the *Time* is always *beat*  
 “ by those before whose Fire he sings and  
 “ dances. The Song concludes by a ge-  
 “ neral *Eboue!* of the whole Choir ; which  
 “ is a second Shout of Approbation.

“ The *young Men* have their *Songs* of a  
 “ more *lively*, and their *Dances* of a more  
 “ *vigorous* Cast ; such as are suitable to  
 “ to their Age. When the Dance is much  
 “ animated, they dance two or three to-  
 “ gether, each at his own Fire : Nor does  
 “ this Mixture ever occasion any Confusion.

“ Among these Dances, *some* are no more  
 “ than a *simple* and *noble* Manner of *march-*  
 “ *ing* up to an *Enemy* ; and of *facing Dan-*  
 “ *ger* with *Intrepidity* and *Gaiety* of Mind.

“ A second Sort of Dance, but still of  
 “ the same Kind, is that of the *Panto-*  
 “ *mimes* : Which consists in representing  
 “ an Action in the Manner in which it  
 “ passed, or such as they conceive it to  
 “ have been. Many of those who have  
 “ lived among the IROQUOIS, have assured  
 “ me, that after a Chief of War hath cir-  
 “ cumstantially recounted, at his Return,  
 “ all that hath passed in the Expeditions  
 “ he had undertaken, and the Battles he  
 “ had fought, they who are present at the

“ Recital

“ Recital often rise on the sudden to dance,  
 “ and represent those Actions with great  
 “ Vivacity, as if they had been present:  
 “ And all this, without any previous Con-  
 “ cert or Preparation.

“ In their *Songs* they *praise* not only  
 “ their *Gods* and *Heroes*, but they likewise  
 “ praise *themselves*: In this they are not  
 “ sparing: and are even *prodigal* in their  
 “ *Praise* of *others*, whom they think wor-  
 “ *thy* of it. He who is thus applauded,  
 “ answers by a shout of Thanks, as soon  
 “ as he hears himself named.

“ They are still quicker at *rallying* each  
 “ other; and succeed to a Wonder in This.  
 “ He who dances, takes whomsoever he  
 “ pleaseth by the Hand, and brings him  
 “ forth into the midst of the Assembly:  
 “ to which he yields without Resistance.  
 “ Meanwhile the *Dancer* continues to *sing*;  
 “ and sometimes in his *Song*, and some-  
 “ times in the *Intervals*, he throws his  
 “ *Sarcafms* on the Patient, who hears him  
 “ without Reply.—At every *Bon Mot*,  
 “ loud *Peals* of *Laughter* arise along the  
 “ *Galleries*, who *animate* this *Sport*, and  
 “ often oblige the Patient to cover his  
 “ Head in his Mantle.

“ They

“ They have another Kind of *Dance*, in  
 “ which the whole *Choir* dances : and this  
 “ is common both to Men and Women.  
 “ As this is very different from the pre-  
 “ ceding ones, they do not use it in their  
 “ *Song-Feasts*. Their Pretenders to *Magic*  
 “ [*c*] often ordain it as an *Act* of *Religion*,  
 “ for the *healing* of the *Sick* : it is also one  
 “ of their Modes of *Divination*. It is like-  
 “ wise practised, at Times, as a mere Ex-  
 “ ercise of *Pleasure*, at the Feasts and So-  
 “ lemnities of the Village. The Manner  
 “ is as follows. Notice is given early in  
 “ the Morning through all the Cabins,  
 “ for the Performance of this Ceremony :  
 “ Every Cabin deputes a certain Number,  
 “ either of Men or Women, who dress  
 “ themselves in all their Finery, that they  
 “ may go and perform their Part. They  
 “ all appear at the appointed Hour (which  
 “ is proclaimed by a public Crier) either  
 “ in the Council-cabin, or some other Place  
 “ destined for the Purpose. In the middle  
 “ of the Place or Cabin they build a little  
 “ Scaffold ; and on this they raise a small

[*c*] *Charlatans*,—a Word with which we have none pre-  
 cisely correspondent in our Language : It signifies here one  
 who is a Pretender to *Medicine* by the Arts of *Magic*.

“ Seat

## 22      *The HISTORY of the RISE*

“ Seat for the *Singers* who are to accom-  
 “ pany and animate the *Dance*. One holds  
 “ in his Hand a *Tambour* or little *Drum*,  
 “ the other a *Tortoise Shell*. While these  
 “ sing, and accompany their Song with  
 “ the Sound of their Instruments (which  
 “ is farther Strengthened by the Specta-  
 “ tors, who beat with little Sticks upon  
 “ the *Kettles* that are before them) they  
 “ who dance, go round in a circular Move-  
 “ ment; but without taking Hands, as  
 “ they do in Europe. Each Dancer makes  
 “ various Motions with his Feet and Hands,  
 “ as he pleaseth: And though all the Move-  
 “ ments are different, according to the  
 “ Whim and Caprice of their Imagina-  
 “ tion, none of them ever lose the *Time*.  
 “ They who are most expert in varying  
 “ their Postures, and throwing themselves  
 “ into Action, are reckoned to excel the  
 “ rest. The Dance is composed of several  
 “ *Returns*: Each *Return* lasts till the Dan-  
 “ cers are out of Breath; and after a short  
 “ Interval of *Repose*, they begin *another*.  
 “ Nothing can be more animated than  
 “ these Movements: To see them, one  
 “ would say, they were a Troop of furious  
 “ and frantic People. What must fatigue  
 “ them

“ them still more is, that not only by  
 “ their Movement, but likewise with their  
 “ Voice, they follow the Singers and their  
 “ Instruments to the End of each *Return*;  
 “ which is always closed by a general and  
 “ loud *Oueb!* which is a Shout of Appro-  
 “ bation, implying that the *Return* hath  
 “ been well performed.

“ Although I have not spoken particu-  
 “ larly of any Nations but those of the  
 “ IROQUOIS and HURONS, yet I may  
 “ truly say, that I have described, at the  
 “ same Time, *all* the other barbarous Na-  
 “ tions of AMERICA, as to what is *essen-*  
 “ *tial* and *principal*. For though there ap-  
 “ pears to be a great Difference between the  
 “ *Monarchic* and *Oligarchic* State, yet the  
 “ Genius of their savage Policy is every  
 “ where the same: We find the same Turn  
 “ for public Affairs, the same Method of  
 “ conducting them, the same Use of se-  
 “ cret and solemn Assemblies, the same  
 “ Characters in their *Feasts*, their *Dances*,  
 “ and their *Diversions*.

“ The *Music* and *Dance* of the *Americans*  
 “ have something in them extremely bar-  
 “ barous, which at first disgusts; and of  
 “ which no Idea can be formed by those  
 “ who

“ who have not seen and heard them. We  
 “ grow reconciled to them by Degrees,  
 “ and in the End partake of them with  
 “ Pleasure. As to the Savages themselves,  
 “ they are fond of these Feasts even to  
 “ Distraction. They continue them whole  
 “ Days and Nights entire; and the Shouts  
 “ of their *Choir* are so violent, as to make  
 “ the Village tremble.”

Thus far the learned Father LAFITAU:  
 For whose Detail no Apology needs be  
 made to the curious Reader. But the  
 more particular Reasons why it is here  
 given at Length, will appear in the fol-  
 lowing Sections.

### S E C T. III.

*Of the natural Consequences of a supposed  
 Civilization.*

**W**HILE these free and warlike Sa-  
 vages continue in their present  
*unlettered* State of Ignorance and Sim-  
 plicity, no material Improvements in their  
*Song-Feasts* can arise. But let us suppose  
 that the Use of *Letters* should come among  
 them, and, as a Cause or Consequence, of  
*Civilization*, be cultivated with that Spirit  
 which



which is natural to a free and active People ; and many notable Consequences would appear. Let us consider the most probable and striking among these natural Effects.

1. Their Idea of *Music* in its most *enlarged* Sense, would probably comprehend the three united Circumstances of *Melody*, *Dance*, and *Poem*. For these three, as we have seen, being naturally conjoined, because naturally producing each other, would not *separately* command the Attention of such a People at their public Festivals. Therefore *Instrumental Melody*, without *Song*, would be little attended to, and of *no Esteem* ; because it would want all those Attractions which must arise from the correspondent *Dance* and *Song*.

2. In the early Periods of such a Commonwealth, the *Chiefs* or *Legislators* would often be the *principal Bards*, *Poets*, or *Musicians*. The two Characters would commonly coalesce ; for we find, that, among the savage Tribes, the *Chiefs* are they who most signalize themselves by *Dance* and *Song* ; and that their *Songs* rowl principally on the *great Actions* and *Events* which concern their *own Nation*.

3. Hence, their most ancient *Gods* would naturally be styled *Singers* and *Dancers*. For the most ancient *Gods* of civilized Pagan Countries, are generally their early *Legislators*, who taught their People the first Arts of Life. These deceased Legislators, therefore, when advanced to the Rank of Gods, would naturally be delivered down to Posterity with the same Attributes and Qualities by which they had distinguished themselves in Life: And it appears, from the last Article, that these Qualities would naturally be those of *Dance* and *Song*.

4. Measured Periods, or in other Words, *Rythm*, *Numbers*, and *Verse*, would naturally arise. For measured Cadence, or *Time*, is an essential Part of Melody, into which the human Ear naturally falls. And as the same Force of Ear would lead the Action or Dance to correspond with the Melody, so the Words or Song must, on a like Principle, keep Pace with *Both*. Among the *savage Americans* we see the first Rudiments of poetic Numbers, emerging from this Source. For “as the Means of adjusting the Words to the Air or Melody, they sometimes strike off Syllables from  
“ their

“ their Words.” And such is the natural Generation of *Rythm* and *Verse*.

5. Their earliest *Histories* would be written in Verse. For we see, that among the savage Tribes, the Actions of their Heroes and Gods, and the great Events of their Nation, make a principal Part of their Songs. Whenever, therefore, the Use of Letters should come among such a People, these *ancient Songs* would naturally be *first recorded*, for the Information and Use of future Times.

6. Their most ancient *Maxims*, *Exhortations*, *Proverbs*, or *Laws*, would probably be written in Verse. For these would naturally make a Part of their *Songs* of Celebration, and would by Degrees be *selected* from thence, would in Time become the *Standard* of *Right* and *Wrong*, and as such, be treasured up and appealed to by the improving Tribe.

7. Their *religious Rites* would naturally be performed or accompany'd by *Dance* and *poetic Song*. For it appears from Fact that the great Actions of their Gods and Heroes are the most general Subject of the savage Dance and Song; and the common End of Pagan Rites hath ever been, to

praise the Gods of the Country, and by these Means (as well as by Sacrifice) to appease their Wrath, or secure their Favour.

8. Their *earliest Oracles* would probably be delivered in *Verse*, and *sung* by the Priest or Priests of the supposed God. For these *Oracles*, being supposed to be *inspired* by a deceased *Chief* (now a *Deity*) who had himself delivered his Exhortations in this *enthusiastic Manner*; and being addressed to a Tribe among whom this Mode of Instruction universally prevailed, no other Vehicle but that of *Verse* and *Song* could at first gain these *Oracles* either *Credit* or *Reception*.

9. Their poetic *Songs* would be of a *legislative* Cast; and being drawn chiefly from the Fables or History of their own Country, would contain the essential Parts of their *religious*, *moral*, and *political* Systems. For we have seen above, that the *Celebration* of their deceased Heroes would of Course grow into a *religious* Act: That the *Exhortations* and *Maxims* intermixed with these Celebrations, and founded on the *Example* of their *Heroe-Gods*; would naturally become the *Standard* of *Right* and *Wrong*; that is, the Foundation of  
*private*

*private Morals* and *public Law*: And thus, the whole Fabric of their *Religion, Morals,* and *Polity*, would naturally arise from, and be included in their *Songs*, during their Progress from savage to civilized Life.

10. MUSIC, in the extended Sense of the Word (that is, including *Melody, Dance,* and *poetic Song*) would make an essential and principal Part in the *Education* of their Children. For the important Principles of their *Religion, Morals,* and *Polity*, being delivered and inculcated in their *Songs* or *Poems*, no other Method could be devised, which would so strongly impress the youthful Mind with the *approved Principles* of *Life* and *Action*.

11. *Melody, Dance,* and *poetic Song*, therefore, thus *united*, must gain a *great* and *universal Power* over the Minds and Actions of such a People. For through the Force of early and continued *Habit*, together with the irresistible Contagion of general *Example*, while every thing pleasing, great, and important, was conveyed through this Medium, and through this only, such strong Impressions would strike themselves into the growing Mind, as would give it its ruling Colour through

Life, and such as no future Incidents could easily weaken or efface.

12. If their warlike Character continued, the *Dance* would naturally *separate* from the *poetic Song*; and would itself become a *distinct Exercise* or *Art*, for the Sake of increasing their Strength and Agility of Body, as the Means of rendering them invincible in War. For the *Dance* or *Action* of their Song-Feasts, being only *secondary*, and merely an Appendage to the Song, would not be of a Character sufficiently severe for the fierce and stubborn Contentions of those who were destined to the immediate Toils of warlike Service.

13. After a certain Period of Civilization, the complex Character of *Legislator* and *Bard* would *separate*, or be seldom united. For as the Society grew more populous, and the increasing Arts of Life increased the Labours and Cares of Government, the *musical Art* (in its extended Sense) would of course be delegated by the civil Magistrate, to such Men of Genius and Worth, as might apply it to its proper Ends, the *Instruction* and *Welfare* of Mankind.

14. In the Course of Time, and Progress of Polity and Arts, a *Separation* of the several

ral

ral Kinds of poetic Song would arise. In the early Periods of Civilization, the several Kinds would of Course lie confused, in a Sort of undistinguished Mass, and be mingled in the same Composition, as Inclination, Enthusiasm, or other Incidents might impel. But repeated Trial and Experiment would naturally produce a more regular Manner; and thus, by Degrees, the several Kinds of Poem would assume their legitimate Forms.

15. *Hymns* or *Odes* would be composed, and Sung by their Composers at their festal Solemnities. For these, in their simple State, are but a Kind of rapturous Exclamations of Joy, Grief, Triumph, or Exultation, in Consequence of some great or disastrous Action, known, alluded to, or expressed: A Species of Composition which naturally ariseth from the savage Song-Feast.

16. The *Epic Poem* would naturally arise, and be sung by its Composers at their public Solemnities. For it appears above [d], that their earliest Histories would be written in Verse, and make a Part of their public Song-Fests. Now, the *Epic Poem* is but a Kind of *fabulous History*,

[d] Article 5.

rowing chiefly on the great Actions of ancient Gods and Heroes, and artificially composed under certain Limitations with Respect to its *Manner*, for the Ends of Pleasure, Admiration, and Instruction.

17. From an *Union* of these two, a certain rude Outline of *Tragedy* would naturally arise. We may see the first Seeds or Principles of this Poem, in the Conduct of the savage *Song-Feast*. A *Chief sings* some great Action of a God or Heroe: The surrounding *Choir answer* him at Intervals, by Shouts of Sympathy or concurrent Approbation.

18. In Process of Time, this barbarous Scene would improve into a more perfect Form: Instead of *relating*, they would probably represent, by Action and Song united, those great or terrible Atchievements which their Heroes had performed. For of this, too, we find the Seeds or Principles in the savage State. “After a Chief of War hath recounted the Battles he had fought, they who are present will often rise up to dance, and represent those Actions with great Vivacity.” If to this we add the usual Exclamations of the  
fur-



furrounding Choir, we here behold the first *rude Form of savage Tragedy*.

19. If the *Choir* should be *established* by general Use, and should animate the Solemnity by *Dance* as well as *Song*; the *Melody*, *Dance*, and *Song* would of Course regulate each other, and the *Ode* or *Song* would fall into *Stanzas* of some particular *Kind*. This appears from the third Article.

20. Another Consequence of an *established Choir* would be an unvaried Adherence to the *Unities* of *Place* and *Time*. For a numerous Choir, maintaining their Station through the whole Performance, must give so forcible a Conviction to the Senses, of the *Sameness* of *Place*, and *Shortness* of *Time*, that any Deviation from this apparent Unity must shock the Imagination with an Improbability too gross to be endured.

21. Not only the Part of the tragic *Choir*, but the *Episode* or *interlocutory* Part would be also *sung*. For as the *Ode* and *Epic* would be *sung* from the earliest Periods; so when they became *united*, and by that Union formed the tragic Species, they of Course maintained the same Appendage of *Melody*, which Nature and Custom had already given them.

22. While

22. While the Nation held its *fierce* and *warlike* Character, the *tragic* Representations would chiefly turn on Subjects *distressful* or *terrible*. For thus they would animate each other to *Victory* and *Revenge*, by a Representation of what their *Friends* had *done* and *suffered*. These Subjects would likewise be most accommodated to the natural Taste of the poetic Chiefs of such a People; whose Atchievements must produce and abound with Events of Distress and Terror. They also would be best suited to the Genius and Ends of their State and Polity: For as the leading View of such a fierce and warlike People must be to destroy Pity and Fear; so this would most effectually be done, by making themselves familiar with distressful and terrible Representations. The gentle Passions, and less affecting Actions, which might fill the Spectacles of a mild and peaceful Nation, would be insipid to the Taste, and incompatible with the Character, of such a warlike People.

23. Their Tragedy being intended as a *visible Representation* of their ancient Gods and Heroes, it would be natural for them to invent some Means of *strengthening* the *Voice*, and *aggrandising* the *Visage* and *Person*,

*son*, as the Means of compleating the Resemblance: For in all Savage Countries, the *tallest* and *strongest* Men are generally selected as their *Chiefs*.

24. As their Tragic *Poets* would be *Singers*, so they would be *Actors*, and perform some capital Part in their own Pieces for the Stage. For we see these different Characters are naturally united in the savage State: Therefore, till some extraordinary Change in Manners and Principles should ensue, this *Union* would of Course continue.

25. *Musical Contests* would be admitted as *public Exercises* in such a State. For we have seen, that the important Articles of Religion, Morals, and Polity, would naturally make a Part of their public Songs: Therefore public Contests of this Kind would be regarded as the best and surest Means of raising an Emulation of a most useful Nature; and of strengthening the State, by inforcing all the fundamental Principles of Society in the most striking and effectual Manner.

26. The Profession of *Bard* would be held as very honourable, and of high Esteem. For he would be vested with a  
Kind

Kind of *public Character*: and if not an original Legislator, yet still he would be regarded as a *subordinate* and *useful Servant* to the *State*.

27. *Odes*, or *Hymns*, would naturally make a Part of their *domestic Entertainments*: and the *Chiefs* would be proud to signalize themselves by their Skill in *Melody* and *poetic Song*. For their Songs being the established Vehicle of all the great and important Subjects relative to the public State; nothing could be more suitable to a high Station in the Commonwealth, than a Proficiency in this sublime and legislative Art.

28. When *Music*, that is, *Melody* and *Poem*, thus *united*, had attained to this State of relative Perfection, it would be regarded as a *necessary Accomplishment*. And if any Man, or Society of Men, were unacquainted with its Practice and Power, their Ignorance in this Art would be regarded as a capital Defect: For it would imply a Deficiency in the three great leading Articles of Education, *Religion*, *Morals*, and *Polity*.

29. The Genius of their *Poem* and *Melody*, would *vary* along with their *Manners*:

*ners*: For Manners being the leading and most essential Quality of Man ; All his other Tastes and Acquirements naturally correspond with *These* ; and accommodate themselves to his Manners, as to their chief and original Cause.

30. As a Change of *Manners* must influence their *Poem* and *Melody*, so, by a reciprocal Action, a Change in *These* must influence *Manners*: For we have seen, that They were the *established Vehicle* of all the great Principles of Education.

31. A Provident Community, of Principles uncommonly severe, would probably fix both the *Subjects* and *Movements* of *poetic Song* and *Dance*, by *Law*: This would arise from a Knowledge of their Influence on Manners.

32. In a Society of more libertine and relaxed Principles, the Corruption of their *Poem* and *Melody* would naturally arise, along with the Corruption of Manners, for the Reasons now assigned: and the Bards, Poets, or Musicians, would be the immediate Instruments of this Corruption. For being educated in a corrupt State they would be apt to debase their Art to vile and immoral Purposes, as the  
Means

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Means of gaining that Applause which would be the natural Object of their Ambition.

33. In Consequence of this Corruption, a gradual and total *Separation* of the *Bard's* complex Character would ensue. For the *Chief* would now no longer pride himself on the Character of *Poet* or Performer; nor the *Man of Genius* and *Worth* descend to the Profession of *Lyrist*, *Singer*, or *Actor*: Because these Professions, which had formerly been the Means of inculcating every thing laudable and great, would now (when perverted to the contrary Purposes) be disdained by the Wise and Virtuous.

### S E C T. IV.

*An Application of these Principles to the Melody, Dance, and Poem, of ancient Greece.*

SUCH may seem to be the Consequences which would naturally arise in a savage, free, and warlike State, should *Letters* be introduced and cultivated among such a spirited and active People. In Support of the Truth of these Deductions, let us now endeavour to *realize* them;

them; by shewing that such Consequences did in Fact arise in ancient GREECE. In the Course of this Review, which will contain the Rise, Progress, Power, Perfection, Separation, and Corruption, of their *Melody*, *Dance*, and *Poem*, we may perhaps be fortunate enough, on the Principles here given, to fix some Things which have been held doubtful, to unfold others which have hitherto been confessedly unaccountable, and to resolve others into their proper and evident Causes, which have been attributed to such Causes as never had Existence.

1. “ Their Idea of *Music*, in its most enlarged Sense, comprehended the three united Circumstances of *Melody*, *Dance*, and *Poem*.”—This appears from the concurrent Testimony of many ancient Authors: The following one from the *Alcibiades* of PLATO may alone be a sufficient Authority. “ *Socr.* Tell me first, what Art is that, to which it belongs properly to *sing*, to *play*, and *dance*? Cannot you find a Name for this comprehensive Art?—*Alcib.* I cannot.—*Socr.* Try a little: Who are the Goddesses that preside over this Art?—*Alcib.* Do you  
“ mean

“ mean the MUSES?—*Socr.* I do: Confer then what Name the Art receives from them.—*Alcib.* You seem to hint “ at MUSIC.—*Socr.* You are right [*e*].”—

The same Truth is no less evident from the circumstantial Account which *ATHE-NÆUS* gives of the old *ARCADIAN Music*; which, in its general Acceptation, included *Melody, Dance, and Song* [*f*]. It appears, then, that this Combination or Union of these three *Sister-Graces* arose naturally in ancient *GREECE*, from an Improvement of the *savage State* into a certain Degree of *Civilization*. They needed no *Art* to joyn them: For as they *naturally* produce each other, and are naturally conjoyned in the savage and uncultivated State, this Union would of Course continue, till some violent Change in Manners or Principles should break that Union which Nature had established.

2. “ In the earliest Periods of the “ *Greek States*, their Legislators were often “ Bards, or their Bards were Legislators.” Such, in a more eminent Degree, were *APOLLO, ORPHEUS, AMPHION, LINUS,*

[*e*] *PLATO, ALCIBIADES.*    [*f*] *Deipnosoph, l. xiv.*



and MUSÆUS [g]. Of this Rank too, was THALES the *Cretan* Lawgiver; who composed Laws in Verse, and sung them to his Lyre [h]. It hath been generally supposed, that the story'd Power of their Lyres and Songs meant no more, than by a metaphorical Expression to convey a strong Idea of their Eloquence and legislative Art, in producing *Order* from *Confusion*. Thus PLUTARCH tells us, that “the Ancients represented the Statues of the Gods with Musical Instruments in their Hands, not as being really Lyres or Flutes; but because they thought, that nothing so much suited the Character and Office of the Gods, as *Harmony* and *Order* [i].” Thus too, a noble Writer of our own Country declares his Opinion, and says, that “*Tradition*, which soon grew *fabulous*, could not better represent the first *Founders* or *Establishers* of large Societies, than as *real Songsters* [k].” But *real Songsters*, beyond Doubt, they were; nor was *Tradition fabulous* in thus representing them. For from a View of human

[g] PLATO *de Rep.* l. ii. [h] STRABO *Geog.* l. x.[i] PLUT. *de Procreat. Anima*, &c.[k] *Characteristics*, vol. i. p. 237.

Nature as emerging from the savage State, it is evident, that the *Song* and *Lyre* (as soon as the *Lyre* was invented) must be the natural Means or Instruments of Civilization, by conveying the Legislator's Precepts to the surrounding People: Because we have seen that, among the savage Tribes, the *Chiefs* are proud to signalize themselves by *Song*; that they *preside* at the *Song-Feasts*; and that their Songs rowl principally on the great Actions, Affairs, and Events of their own Nation.—A concurrent Proof of this natural Union of the Bard's and Legislator's Office might be drawn, were it necessary, from the Name which the old THESSALIANS gave their *Magistrates*: They styled them *πρωτοχορηγοί* or “the Leaders of the “Dance and Song-Feast [1]:” A Circumstance which plainly points out its own Origin.

3. “Their most ancient Gods were “styled *Singers* and *Dancers*.” Thus HORACE calls APOLLO the *Singer* [m]. PINDAR styles him the *Dancer* [n]. HOMER, or the Author of the Hymns that pass

[1] LUCIAN. *de Saltatione*. [m] *Ep. ad Pisones*. [n] *Ode*.

under his Name, gives him the same Appellation [o]. RHEA, the Mother of JUPITER, is said to have taught her Priests the Art of *Dancing*, both in PHRYGIA and CRETE [p]: AS CASTOR and POLLUX instructed the *Lacedemonians* in the same Art [q]. EUMELUS or ARCTINUS the *Corinthian* brings in even JUPITER himself *dancing*, in these Words,

*Among them danc'd the Sire of Gods and Men* [r].

Whence it arose, that these ancient Gods were represented as *Singers* and *Dancers*, and vested with a Quality which at first Sight seems altogether foreign to their Character, hath not as yet been accounted for. We now see the true and natural Origin of these Appellations. For the most ancient Gods, among the civilized *Greeks*, were their early Legislators, who taught the savage Tribes the first Arts of Life. These deceased Legislators, therefore, when advanced to the Rank of Gods, were naturally delivered down to Posterity, with the same Attributes or

[o] *Hymn. in Apollinem.* [p] LUCIAN. *de Saltatione.*

[q] *Ibid.* [r] *Apud ATHENÆUM Deipn.* l. i.

Qualities by which they distinguished themselves in Life: and it appears from a View of the *Chiefs* of the savage Tribes, that these Qualities would naturally be those of *Dance* and *Song*.

4. “Measured Periods, or, in other Words, Rythm, Numbers, and Verse, did naturally arise.” The general Reason is assigned in the fourth Article of the last Section; and needs not to be repeated here. But as some particular Consequences arise from this Foundation, relative to the most ancient *History*, *Laws*, and *Oracles*, these will deserve a separate Consideration.

5. “Their earliest Histories were written in Verse.” This Fact is indisputable; but seems not, as yet, to have been resolved into its true Cause. STRABO informs us, that, “The Poetic Form first appeared: They who imitated it, dropped the Measure: Such were CADMUS the *Milesian*, PHERECYDES and HECATÆUS [s]”. These were the first *Greek* Historians who writ in Prose. Another learned Ancient confirms this Account; and says,

[s] STRABO, l. i.

“ In these early Times, so general was  
 “ the Inclination to Rythm and Numbers,  
 “ that all Instruction was given in Verse:  
 “ There was neither *History* nor *Philosophy*,  
 “ nor any Action to be described, but  
 “ what was dressed by the *Muses* [*t*].”  
 Not only the *Greek* Writers give a con-  
 current Testimony concerning the Priority  
 of *historical Verse* to *Prose*, but the Re-  
 cords of all Nations unite in confirming  
 it. The oldest Compositions among the  
 ARABS are in Rythm or rude Verse;  
 and are often cited as Proofs of the Truth  
 of their subsequent History [*u*]. The Ac-  
 counts we have of the *Peruvian* Story  
 confirm the same Fact: For GARCILASSO  
 tells us, that he compiled a Part of his  
*Commentaries* from the *ancient Songs* of the  
 Country [*w*]. Nay all the *American* Tribes  
 who have any Compositions, are found  
 to establish the same Truth [*x*]. Nor-  
 thern EUROPE contributes its Share of  
 Testimony: For there, too, we find the  
*Scythian* or *Runic* Songs (many of them  
*historical*) to be the oldest Compositions

[*t*] PLUTARCH. [*u*] *Hist. de las Guerras Civil. de Grenada.* [*w*] *Comment. Real.* [*x*] LAFITAU.

among these barbarous Nations [y]. ODIN is said to have boasted, that “his Runic Poems were given him by the Gods [z].” A Circumstance which proves them to have been of the highest Antiquity.

The Fact, then, is clear and certain: And as it is somewhat mysterious to common Apprehension, various Solutions have been attempted by the Learned; though, in my Opinion, without Success. I shall give them, as they appear in various Writers.

LONGINUS hath aimed at something like a Reason, in the following Passage; “Measure belongs *naturally* to Poetry, as “its Province is the Description and *Language* of the *Passions*; together with *Fiction* or Fable, which *produce Numbers*. “Hence it was that the Ancients (even in “their common Discourse) used Measure “and Verse, rather than Prose [a].” It can hardly be necessary to observe, that the celebrated Critic, in this Passage, gives a mere *Affirmation* instead of an *Argument*.

[y] BARTHOLIN. *de Contemptu Mortis*, &c. HICKES *Thef. Septentr.* [z] SHERINGHAM *Orig. Gent. Angl.*

[a] LONGIN. *de Metr.*

He says, indeed, “ that the Language of the  
 “ Passions, and Fiction, naturally produce  
 “ Measure and Numbers :” But the Reason  
 is still to seek. It were to be wished, that  
 in many Parts of his Writings, he had  
 not given us more Instances of his fine  
 Taste, than his Power of Reasoning.

A learned Modern of our own Nation  
 hath try'd his Talent in this curious  
 Question. “ They (the Ancients) thought,  
 “ it would seem, that Language was the  
 “ first Tamer of Men; and took its Ori-  
 “ gin to have been certain rude accidental  
 “ Sounds, which that naked Company of  
 “ scrambling Mortals emitted by Chance.  
 “ Upon this Supposition it will follow,  
 “ that at first they uttered these Sounds in  
 “ a *much higher Note* than we do our  
 “ Words now; occasioned, *perhaps*, by  
 “ their falling on them under some Pas-  
 “ sion, Fear, Wonder, or Pain; and then  
 “ using the same Sound, either when the  
 “ Object or Accident recurred, or when  
 “ they wanted to describe it by what they  
 “ felt from its Presence. *Neither the Syl-*  
 “ *lables nor the Tone could be ascertained:*  
 “ but when prompted by the Return of  
 “ the Passion, under which they invented

“ them, they *extended* their *Throats* and  
 “ put several of these Marks together,  
 “ they would *seem* to *sing*. Hence *audaciv*  
 “ signified at first simply to *speak*, or utter  
 “ the Voice ; which now, with a small  
 “ Abbreviation (*adiv*) signifies to *sing* :  
 “ And hence came the ancient Opinion,  
 “ which appears so *strange* to *Us*, that  
 “ Poetry was before Prose [*b*].” Here we  
 see an ingenious Writer toiling in vain  
 to prop a mistaken Principle. For, to  
 omit all the weak Parts of the Paragraph  
 which might expose it to Ridicule, if nei-  
 ther *Syllables* nor *Tones* could be *ascertained*,  
 it follows, that neither *Measure* nor *Melody*  
 could arise ; and therefore it must even  
 continue to appear as strange as ever,  
 “ that Poetry should be before Prose.”

Mr. DE VOLTAIRE talks more speci-  
 cally (after ARISTOTLE and PLUTARCH  
 [*c*]) on this Subject. “ Before HERODO-  
 “ TUS, even History was not written but  
 “ in Verse among the GREEKS, who had  
 “ borrowed this Custom from the ancient  
 “ EGYPTIANS, the wisest, the best policed,

[*b*] *Eng. into the Life of HOMER*, p. 38.

[*c*] See the following Articles.

“ and



“and the most knowing People upon  
 “Earth. This Custom was very *reasona-*  
 “*ble*: for the End of History was to pre-  
 “serve to Posterity the *Memory* of those  
 “few great Men, whose Example might be  
 “of Service to Mankind. They only writ  
 “what was worthy of being retained by  
 “Heart. This is the Reason why they  
 “laid hold of the Harmony of *Verse*;  
 “that they might aid the *Memory*. And  
 “hence it was, that the first *Philoso-*  
 “*phers, Legislators, and Historians,* were  
 “all *Poets* [*d*].”

As this is the most plausible Reason  
 that hath ever been assigned for this  
 mysterious Fact, it will deserve a parti-  
 cular Consideration. The Cause assigned  
 seems, therefore, to rest on no probable  
 Foundation, for the following Reasons.

First, because it seems to take for grant-  
 ed the Existence of the very Thing which  
 it is said to have produced. If we sup-  
 pose Rythm, Numbers, and Verse, to exist  
 and be in general Use, they would un-  
 doubtedly become the natural Means of  
 Memory and Record among a barbarous

[*d*] *Preface à Oedip.*

People.

People. But to *invent* the Vehicle of *Rythm*, from a *Forefight* of its being the best Instrument of Memory, without any prior Impulse from unassisted Nature, seems altogether incompatible with the general Character of the savage Tribes: For in the Period of savage Manners, the Power of *abstract Reasoning* is always *weak*, and is often found to have *no Place*.

Again: The *Universality* of the Fact adds greatly to the Improbability of the Cause assigned. Though we should suppose it possible or probable, that one savage Chief might by Dint of Reason strike out this new Method of recording History; yet that *All* savage Chiefs, in every known Age and Climate, should *unite* in the *same* Contrivance, is highly improbable. If one of more exalted Capacity delivered his Stories in Verse, *another* of inferior Reach and Invention would naturally give them to Posterity in plain Prose: Nay, the acknowledged Difficulty of *Versification* would naturally make the *prosaic* Manner the more *common*, though less effectual Method of the two. Now, the contrary to this is acknowledged to be true, even by those  
who

who contend for the Truth and Sufficiency of the Cause assigned. The *Universality* of the Fact is allowed by All. Such an universal Coincidence, therefore, must spring from some other Cause, such as ariseth unalterably from Nature, and takes Place among the savage Tribes in an universal and unvaried Manner.

Farther: If the ancient Songs, prior to Prose in every Nation, had been *coolly composed* for the Sake of *Tradition* and *Information only*, they would have been *circumstantial* and *precise*: Whereas the contrary appears in their Construction: They are generally *vague* and *enthusiastic*; and bear all the Marks of being the genuine Effects of savage *Passion* and *Enthusiasm*. So far are they from containing any regular *Series* of Facts, that Facts are often *hinted* only; while the mere *Celebration* of the Heroe forms the chief Weight and *Burthen* of the Song.

Lastly, the universal Connection of the *old Poetry* with *Melody*, and the unvary'd Custom of *singing it*, amounts to the strongest Proof, that the mere End of *Memory* and *Tradition* could not be its original Cause. For had the sole Inten-

tion

tion of the Song been that of *Record only*, a mere *Recitation* of the Verses would have answered the same Purpose. And we may affirm it to be a *moral Impossibility* that an universal Union of Verse and Melody could have taken Place on this Foundation.

Since, therefore, the Cause hitherto assigned seems altogether inadequate to the Effect ; can we reasonably entertain a Doubt, in resolving it into that Principle which we have already found universally predominant in savage Life ? I mean, the natural Passion for *Melody* and *Dance*, which necessarily throws the accompanying *Song* into a *correspondent Rythm*. Hence, the Use of Rythm and Verse must naturally arise in GREECE (as in every other Country emerging from Barbarity) because Melody, Dance, and poetic Song, made a principal Employment of their savage State. And hence, their earliest Histories must of course be written in Verse ; because the Actions of their Gods and Heroes made a principal Part of their Songs ; and therefore, when the Use of Letters came among them, these ancient Songs were naturally *first* recorded,

ed, that is, they became their earliest *Histories*, for the Information and Use of future Times.

As this Cause, when viewed in itself, seems amply and clearly to account for the Effect, so it will receive farther Confirmation, if we consider how naturally it removes all those Objections which load the Opinion here controverted. For it neither requires nor supposeth any Power of *abstract Reasoning* among the *savage* Tribes, but is the mere Effect of *Passion* and uncultivated Nature. Its Universality, therefore, becomes highly probable; because the Principles of *savage* Nature (making Allowance for the Difference of Soil and Climate) are every where the same. The *Genius* of the ancient Songs of every Nation adds new Degrees of Evidence: For they are generally irregular and enthusiastic; and therefore the genuine Productions of *unlettered Enthusiasm*. Lastly, their universal Connexion with *Melody*, and the unvary'd Practice of *singing* them, comes up to a full and direct Proof, of the Reality of the Cause now assigned.

It must not be disguised, that the most learned VOSSIUS was so struck with the

Dif-

Difficulty of accounting for this Appearance, that he thinks it best to deny the Fact. "To me the contrary seems true ; that " Prose was first written, and then Poetry. " Tis natural to walk on Foot before we " mount on Horseback ; and it is certain " that Men first *spoke* in *Prose* and then " in *Numbers*. We have nothing more " ancient than the Writings of MOSES ; " and these are in Prose, with Songs intermixed [*e*]." On this Reasoning it may be remarked, that although it be certain that Men *spoke* in *Prose* before they *spoke* in *Verse* ; yet the Consequence follows not, that therefore they must *write* in *Prose* before they *writ* in *Verse*. The sole Question is, what would be deemed best worth recording, on the first Rise of the *writing Art* ? Surely, the Actions and Celebrations of their Ancestors, Gods, and Heroes ; Now these, we have already seen, must naturally make the chief Subject of their festal Songs ; and therefore their *festal Songs* were of Course the *first* Things *written* or *recorded*.

[*e*] *De Artis Poët. Nat. et Const.* c. i.

With

With respect to the Instance alledged by the learned Critic, of the Writings of MOSES, and the Practice of ancient EGYPT, this, when properly explained, will confirm the Truth of the Cause here given. MOSES, we know, was learned in all the Wisdom of the *Egyptians*: EGYPT was in his Time become a *polished Nation*: and therefore, according to the natural Course of Things (as will appear below) *Prose* had been introduced before the Time of MOSES, as it was afterwards in GREECE by HECATÆUS and others. As to the intermixed Songs in the Writings of MOSES, it is now a Point agreed among the Learned, that they are written in *Measure*; and correspond in all Respects with the Principle here delivered. And that *Poem* was the oldest Form of Composition in EGYPT, we learn clearly from two ancient Writers: The First informs us, that their Music and Songs had continued unchanged, for upwards of three thousand Years [*f*]: The other gives a more particular Account of their Nature, and Manner of being sung. “ The

[*f*] PLATO *de Rep.* l. vii.

“ first

“ first of the Priests who used to appear in  
 “ the religious Procession, was a *Choragus*, *Bard*, or *Singer*, who carried the  
 “ Symbol of Music, and could repeat by  
 “ Heart the two first Books of MERCURY;  
 “ the first containing *Hymns* in Honour  
 “ of the Gods; the second containing  
 “ *Sentences* or *Maxims* for the Conduct of  
 “ a King [g].”

6. “ Their most ancient *Maxims*, *Exhortations*, *Proverbs*, or *Laws* were  
 “ written in *Verse*.” Having traced the  
 Antiquity of Song and poetic History to  
 its true and natural Cause, the present Article  
 will be of easy Discussion. For as  
 the Greek Songs and poetic Stories were  
 fraught with the great Actions of their  
 Gods and Heroes, so *Maxims* of *Exhortation*,  
 which in barbarous Countries hold  
 the Place of *Laws*, must of Course make  
 a Part of these public Songs, must by  
 Degrees be selected from them, and in  
 Time be appealed to, as the *Standard* of  
*Right* and *Wrong*.

However, as ARISTOTLE hath hinted  
 at another Cause, the slightest Conjecture



of so great a Name must not pass unnoticed. He puts the Question thus. "Why are many *Songs* called by the Name of *Laws*? Was it because, before the Invention of the Art of Writing, *Laws* were sung, lest they should be forgotten [*h*]?" On this Passage it will be only necessary to remark, First, that the Opinion is delivered as a mere Conjecture. Secondly, that all the Difficulties which load the common Opinion concerning the first Rise of *poetic History*, lie equally heavy upon *this*: And lastly, that the same Solution leads us up to the true Cause, on the natural Principles of the *savage Song-Feast*. This Solution may, perhaps, in the Opinion of some, receive additional Confirmation from the concurrent Authority of CASAUBON; who declares it his Belief (though he assigns no Reason) that the *Songs* called *Nomoi* were *Fragments* of ancient Poetry, which had been selected and preserved on Account of their Utility [*i*].

[*h*] *Problem*. Sect. xix. Art. 28. He is followed in this Opinion by the learned Mr. GOGUET, in his late Book on Laws and Government. "The earliest Legislators set their Laws to Music, that they might be more easily retained." *Tom. ii. L. i. Art. 8.*

[*i*] In LAERT.

7. "Their earliest *religious Rites* were performed or accompanied by *Dance* and "*poetic Song*." The *Orgies* of BACCHUS, celebrated in this Manner, were famed through all the Ages of Antiquity. STRABO tells us, that "the *Greeks* RE-TAINED the Custom *common* to the *Barbarians*, of celebrating their Sacrifices to the Gods with Music, consisting of Dance, Melody, and poetic Song:" And highly extols this Practice, "as tending to unite the Soul with God [*k*]." PLUTARCH adds his Testimony, and informs us, that in GREECE "the first Application of Music was to religious Ceremonies, in Honour of the Gods [*l*]." All this flows naturally from the View we have given of savage Life and Manners: For we have seen that the Praises of their Chiefs are the most general Topic of the savage Dance and Song; and the *Grecian Gods* were no other than their *deceased Chieftains*.

8. "Their earliest *Oracles* were delivered in Verse, and sung by the Priest or Priests of the supposed God." The natural Cause of this Fact hath been assigned in

[*k*] STRABO, l.[*l*] PLUT. *de Musica*.

the Article which corresponds with this. The Ancients knew and confessed the Fact, but were so entirely ignorant of the true Cause, that they *laboured* more in this Point, than even in accounting for the Rise of *poetic History* and *Laws*. This will appear from PLUTARCH, who hath written a Discourse on the following Question, “Why the PYTHIA no longer gives her Oracles in Verse?” Now, before he assigned the Causes why this Practice of *Oracular Verse* had *ceased*, it was natural that he should enquire how it first *began*: And the Causes (if such they may be called) which he assigns, are these.

First, “The ancient Times produced a Race of Men, who had naturally, and from *bodily Temperament*, a stronger Turn for Poetry.” Secondly, “There was a Time, when, instead of the Art of Writing, Men used Metre, Verse, or Songs; adapting History, and other the weightiest Subjects, to Poetry and Music.” Thus they celebrated the Gods; and told their Fables in Verse, some through the Force of *Genius*, and others by the Power of *Custom*.” Therefore the God permitted the Application of Verse and

“ Song to his Oracles, and would not  
 “ drive the Muses from his Tripod.”  
 Thirdly, “ The Utility of Poetry is in  
 “ nothing more conspicuous, than in its  
 “ Assistance to the *Memory*, by the Means  
 “ of Numbers. The Ancients had great  
 “ Need of This, beyond the Moderns, be-  
 “ cause the Oracles referred to Persons,  
 “ Things, and Places, which were often  
 “ unknown to them [m].”

Thus the learned PLUTARCH ; whose weak Reasonings (because he wanted Facts to lead him to the Truth) hardly need a Confutation. For how came it so to pass, that the first Race of Men were by *natural bodily Temperament* of a stronger Turn to Poetry ? How came it so to pass, that they told their Fables in Verse, some by the Force of *Genius*, others by the Power of *Custom* ? These Affirmations take for granted the very Point in Question.

With Respect to the last Reason which the great Author assigns, “ The Utility of  
 “ Numbers, as an Assistance to the Memo-  
 “ ry ;” This, when applied to *Oracles*, is

[m] PLUT. *Diff. Cur nunc Pythia non reddat ora-  
 cula carmine.*

not only incumbered with all the Difficulties which load the common System concerning the Origin of *poetic History* and *Laws* ; but is contrary to the clear Evidence of Facts, which assure us that the poetic Oracles of DELPHI were the Effect of *Enthusiasm*. DIODORUS gives a particular Account of the Rise and Establishment of this Oracle, from the sole Principle of *Enthusiasm* [m]. And PAUSANIAS informs us, that HEROPHILE was a very ancient Priestess ; and that “ she delivered her prophetic Inspirations “ with frantic Gestures, and in heroic “ *Verse* and *Song* [n].” PLUTARCH tells us farther concerning this *savage Heroine*, that “ she is said to have *celebrated Her- “ self* in her *Songs* ; and boasted, that she “ should not cease to prophecy after her “ Death : That she would ascend to the “ Moon, and be metamorphosed into that “ Face which we see in the Moon’s Body “ [o].” These Passages compared with what hath here been delivered on the *savage Song-Feasts*, unveil the true Origin of the old *poetic Oracles* of GREECE.

[m] L. xvi. [n] PAUS, in *Phœciis*. [o] *Loco supra citato*.

And the whole Account of the *Self-Celebrations* of HEROPHILE, her frantic *Gestures, Verse, and Song*, contains a true Picture of an *enthusiastic Savage* : For it appears above, “ that Music, Dance, and “ Song, are one of the common Modes “ of *Divination* among the savage IRO- “ QUOIS [*p*].”

9. Their *poetic Songs* were of a *legislative* Cast; and being “ drawn chiefly from “ the Fables or History of their own “ Country, contained the essential Parts of “ their *religious, political, and moral* Syf- “ tems.” We have seen above that the Celebration of their deceased Heroes became naturally a *religious Act* : That the *Maxims* or *Exhortations* intermixed with these, and founded on the *Example* of their Heroe-Gods, became of Course the *Standard* of *Right* and *Wrong*, that is, the Foundation of *private Morals* and of *public Law* : Having no *Revelation* from Heaven, these Songs naturally became their *religious, political, and moral CODE* : and thus the whole Fabric of their *Religion, Morals, and Polity*, arose from their *Song-Fests*, in their Progress from *savage* to *civilized* Life.

[*p*] See the Passage from LAFITAU.

The

The Records that remain concerning the *Bards* of ancient GREECE unite in confirming this Principle. Of this illustrious Catalogue, LINUS was perhaps the first: He writ the Exploits of the first BACCHUS; and sung the Generation of the World and the Rise of Things [q]. PAMPHO is supposed to have been his Disciple: And He composed *Hymns* in Honour of the Gods; and sung the Rape of PROSERPINE by PLUTO [r].

The next great poetic and musical Sage was ORPHEUS: He is said to have sung of *Chaos* and *Creation*; and a Variety of other Subjects *religious* and *philosophical* [s]. Some fine Fragments remain under his Name; but there is Reason, from some internal Marks in the Composition, to believe them spurious.

MUSÆUS is said to have been the Disciple of ORPHEUS: He, too, writ *Hymns* and *Prophecies*, and sung the Motions of the *Stars*, and the Battles of the *Giants* [t]. THAMYRIS was not less distinguished by

[q] DIODORUS, l. iii. and LAERTIUS.

[r] PAUSANIAS in *Bæoticis* [s] SUIDAS in *Orpheo*.

[t] LAERTIUS in *Proem*.

the *legislative* Genius of his Songs: For he was not only the Author of a *Titan's War*; but celebrated the Gods in *Hymns*, and sung the *Generation* of the *World* [u].

These are the most celebrated *Bards* of ancient GREECE, whose Songs have perished in the Wreck of Time. If we come down to the most famous of those, whose Writings have been preserved, we shall find their Songs composed in the same *legislative* Style and Genius.

HESIOD seems to stand at the Head of these, in the Order of Time. And his *Theogony* is a living Witness how far his *legislative* Turn accords to the Principles here delivered. He gives, in Form, the *Generation* of all the *Gods* of GREECE; and mixeth his Narration with their *Acts* and *Praises*.

HOMER appears next in the Order of Time: And in his unrivaled Songs we find the *Religion*, *Politics*, and *Manners* of ancient GREECE displayed with all the Appearances of Truth, because delivered with all their *Imperfections*. During the early Periods of Civilization, the *legislative*

[u] SUIDAS in *Tham*.



Art is always of an *imperfect* Form. In the rude Progress of barbarous Manners, the *moral* Ideas are *confined*, and little distinguished. If the People be fierce and warlike (as were the Tribes of GREECE) Strength, Courage, Agility, and Cunning, are the ruling Virtues. Hence it follows, that the Pictures both of *Gods* and *Men* will accord to this Principle in such a Period: And hence many of the Fables of HOMER himself were of a Cast so different from the Spirit of *improved Legislation*, that PLATO refused them Admittance into his Republic [*w*].

And here, while we acknowledge HOMER as the supreme Painter of natural Manners, and of a Genius truly *legislative* according to the Principles of his Time;

[*w*] *De Rep.* l. ii, iii.—It is generally affirmed and believed, that PLATO was for banishing Poetry, without Exception, from his perfect Republic. So far is this from being true, that he affirms directly, “ that he “ only means to banish That which is pernicious; but “ to retain That which is useful.” [*De Rep.* l. x.] Nay, he hath written a whole Book [*De Leg.* l. ii.] to prove the Utility of *Musick* in the Education of Youth: through the Course of which, it is evident, that in His Idea, *Poetry* makes the most essential Part of *Musick*.

critical

critical Justice demands, that we take off some of those false Colourings of Praise, which both Ancients and Moderns have lavished on him, in Regard to the Excellence of the *Morals* which he taught. HORACE, it is well known, hath set him above the old Philosophers, as a Teacher of all Virtue [x]. PLUTARCH in his Life of HOMER, hath advanced the same Positions: But whoever will examine his Poems with an impartial Eye, will find a very deficient Plan of Morals prevailing through them. There is not the least Vestige or Appearance of those abstract general Principles of moral Excellence or Blame, which take Place in the more refined Periods of social and polished Life: His Gods and Heroes fight and plunder, kill and ravish, boast and lye; are generous, fierce, prodigal, rapacious, cruel, or unrelenting, without much Controul from *moral Ideas* within, or from a *refined legislative Art* without.

It is remarkable that PLUTARCH, after labouring in vain through many Pages, to prove that the Principles of all the

[x] *Qui quid pulchrum, &c.*

Virtues are to be found in HOMER, is forced at length to conclude; “It is true, “indeed, that *bad* Actions and Principles “are intermixed and described in the same “Manner; which was necessary, for the “Introduction of the Sublime and Wonderful: But this only makes the Contrast “the stronger; so that the Reader is necessarily led to *select* the *Good* and *reject* “the *Bad* [y].” But as this great Ancient, along with others, allow that neither the *good* nor the *bad* is actually recommended by the Poet; the Consequence follows, that the Reader (if so disposed) may as easily *select* the *bad*, and *reject* the *good*: That HOMER was a compleat *natural Painter* of the Ways of Men; but an imperfect moral Painter from the *unpolished Genius* and *barbarous Legislation* of the Age in which he lived.

The Inconsistency of a late learned Writer on this Subject is too glaring to pass unnoticed. He justly criticiseth VIRGIL, as being shackled by the refined Manners of his Times, and the political Forms of his Country. With equal Truth he

[y] *In Vita HOMERI.*

displays

displays the free Vein of Nature, which runs through HOMER's Poems. "The natural Greek in HOMER's Days, covered none of his Sentiments: He frankly owned the Pleasures of Love and Wine: He told how voraciously he eat when he was hungry; and how horribly he was frightened when he saw an approaching Danger: He looked on *no means as base* to escape it; and was *not* at all *ashamed* to relate the *Trick* or *Fetch* that had brought him off."—Even AGAMEMNON is not ashamed to own his Passion for a captive Maid, in the Face of the whole Army: He tells them plainly, that he likes her much better than his Lady, the beautiful CLYTEMNESTRA, of the prime Grecian Nobility [z]." All this Criticism is just and fine. But who can but wonder at what follows?—"His Work is the great Drama of Life acting in our View: *There* we see *Virtue* and *Piety* *praised*; public *Religion* *promoted*; *Temperance*, *Forgiveness*, and *Fortitude*, re-

[z] *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of HOMER*, p. 338.

"warded;

“warded ; Truth and Character followed ;  
 “and accordingly find it standing at the  
 “Head of human Writings [a].” As a  
*natural Picture* of Manners, its *Superiority*  
*is acknowledged* : As a *moral Picture*, its  
*Defects* are no less *conspicuous*.—Where is  
*Virtue* praised ? Is it in the Conduct of  
 the natural Greek, who looked upon *no*  
*means* as *base* to escape Danger ? Nor was  
 at all *ashamed* to relate the *Trick* or *Fetch*  
 that brought him off ? Is it in the Con-  
 duct of AGAMEMNON, who declared his  
*Passion* for a *Captive*, and his *Neglect* of  
 his *Queen*, in the *Face* of the *whole Army* ?  
 —Where is *Piety* praised ? Is it in the  
 Feat of DIOMEDE, who attacked and  
 wounded one of the Gods ?—Where is  
 public Religion (in the improved Sense)  
 promoted ? Is it in his Descriptions of  
*Heaven* and *Hell* ? In the *first* of which  
 the *Adultery* of MARS and VENUS is  
 treated as a *Jest* by all the *Gods* : In  
 the *second*, the Souls of the *best Men* are  
 represented wandering *forlorn* and *com-*  
*fortless*.

[a] Enquiry into the Life and Writings of HOMER,  
 P. 338.

In all this, the Poet is not blameable: He painted what he saw, and believed, and painted truly. The Fault lay in the Opinions and Manners of the Times: In the Defects of an early and barbarous Legislation, which had but half-civilized Mankind.

Our great *Translator* of HOMER hath often departed from the Character of his Original in this Respect: He hath frequently thrown in fine *moral* Traits, of which there is not the least Footstep in his *Author*. By this, indeed, he hath given us a Poem more accommodated to the Taste of our own Times; but hath lost the native and unpolished Simplicity which distinguishes the venerable old Prince of *Epic Song*.

The next great *legislative Bard* whom I shall now mention, was PINDAR. At the Period when He flourished, the Fortune and Glory of GREECE were rising to their Meridian: The *legislative Arts* had now obtained a higher Degree of *Perfection*: And accordingly we find, in his sublime *Songs*, the fullest and most perfect Union of salutary Principles, thrown out in Maxims religious, political

tical, and moral. No Vices or Imperfections, either of Gods or Men, are there applauded or palliated; nor ever recited, but to be condemned: All Actions are praised or censured, according to their Influence on the public Happiness. The Intent of these *Songs*, sung by their Author at their most general and renowned Festivals, was to inspire his Countrymen with the Love of Glory and of Virtue. To this great End, he animated them, not only by the Example and Praise of the Victors in the *Olympic Games*; but ascended into past Times, and drew from thence the shining Acts of Gods and Heroes, who had distinguished themselves by Valour, Arts, or Virtues.

And here, in Justice to this great Poet we must observe, that PINDAR'S Songs, considered in this *legislative* View, afford an easy and internal Solution of a Difficulty which hath at all Times embarrassed his Commentators and Critics; who have ever censured his seeming Irregularities and sudden Flights, from the *declared Heroe* of his Poem, to *Gods* and *deceased Chieftains*. But on the Principle here given, it appears, that the Heroe of  
the

the Day was but the *occasional* and *incidental* Subject of his Ode. The main Intent was the Praise of his Country's Gods and Heroes, who had signalized themselves by Actions beneficent and great. When therefore he seems to *wander* into the Celebration of *their* Names, he is indeed *severely true* to the *leading Subject* of his Song.

The very Objection itself, as it is urged by some of PINDAR'S Critics, leads us to the Solution here given. A French Writer thus expresseth it. "He is not  
 " always content with praising the *Coun-*  
 " *try* of his *Heroe* ; he proceeds to cele-  
 " brate the *great Men* which it had *pro-*  
 " *duced*, and then it is that he *wanders*  
 " *indeed*. So when his *Heroe* is of EGINA,  
 " after having celebrated the Isle in *ge-*  
 " *neral*, he descends to *Particulars*, and  
 " praiseth ÆACUS, PELEUS, TELAMON,  
 " ACHILLES, and NEOPTOLEMUS, AJAX,  
 " and TEUCER, who all *sprung* from  
 " *thence* : He mentions CYPRUS, SALA-  
 " MINE, PHTHIA, EPIRUS, which were  
 " *Colonies founded by these Heroes* [b]."

[b] *Hist. de l'Acad. Royale des Inscrit.* t. v. p. 96.



There cannot be a better Illustration of the *Solution* here given, than this very *Objection* thus presented at large.

There is a fabulous Story told, which strongly confirms the Principle here delivered; and proves it to have been the Opinion of ancient GREECE, that a Part of these festal Celebrations was due to the Gods and Heroes; and that it was even a *Crime* to omit their Praises. “The Poet SIMONIDES, having agreed with an *Olympic Victor*, called SCOPAS, for an Ode of Celebration; SIMONIDES, according to Custom, went largely into the Praise of CASTOR and POLLUX. On this, SCOPAS gave him the *third Part* of the Price, and told him, that he must apply to CASTOR and POLLUX for the Remainder. SCOPAS being afterwards at a Banquet with SIMONIDES, Word was brought, that *two Men*, covered with Sweat and Dust were at the Door, and desired to speak with SIMONIDES: He went out of the Chamber, and immediately the Roof fell in, and buried SCOPAS in the Ruins [c].”

[c] CICERO *de Oratore*, l. ii. QUINTIL. l. xi. c. 2.

The three *Greek* TRAGEDIANS are the last of this illustrious Catalogue of legislative Bards: And their Writings, though very different in their Style and Manner, yet all unite in holding forth the leading Principles of the Greek Religion, Polity, and Morals.

ESCHYLUS, who stands first in Order of Time, partakes much of the rude Genius of the early Periods. His Imagery and Sentiments are great; his Style rugged and abrupt; and of a Cast so totally different from that of HOMER, that it is astonishing to hear the Critics, one after another, affirming that HOMER was his Model [*d*]. His Writings present to us all the Characters of a sublime, original, and uncultivated Genius, which scorned any other Tutorefs than *Nature*. He was himself a great Warrior; and his warlike Genius threw itself out, in Subjects that were grand and terrible. Hence his Tragic Songs abound with the most gloomy and tremendous Exploits of the Grecian Heroes, striking the Soul with Admiration, Astonishment, and Terror.

[*d*] See this Point considered below, Art. 18.

SOPHOCLES appeared next ; of a more sedate and tempered Majesty : He improved on ESCHYLUS both in *Plan* and *Morals*. For the *legislative Arts* were now advancing at ATHENS with great Rapidity. No Wonder, therefore, that the Disciple conquered his Master ; when he had the improving Sense of his Country to elevate and inlarge his Genius. But still the Gods and Heroes of GREECE were the constant Subject of his Song.

EURIPIDES, considered in the legislative View, was on a Level with his Masters with Respect to the Subject of his Tragedies (for these were always drawn from the *Grecian Gods* or *Heroes*) but possessed himself of the Advantage which the still improving State of his Country gave him. For *Philosophy* was now in its Ascendant : The *Poet* was the *Disciple* of an eminent *Sage* : Hence the Genius of EURIPIDES carried the legislative Power of Song to its last Perfection ; and threw itself out in such a Variety of Maxims, *political* and *moral*, as far outwent the Art of his Predecessors.

Such then, through the various Ages of ancient GREECE, was the legislative

Genius of their *Songs* ; which, in their several Periods contained the leading Principles of their *Religion, Morals, and Polity* ; and thus became the natural and proper Object of the public Attention and Regard.

10. “ MUSIC, in its more extensive Meaning, that is, including *Melody* and “ *poetic Song* [*e*] either with or without “ the *Dance*” (for this last, as will appear below [*f*], was soon separated from the other two, for an important End) “ bore “ a principal and essential Part in the Education of their Children.” The Authorities which prove this are abundant, and even superfluous. Some of the principal may suffice. “ Among the Ancients” (says the wise PLUTARCH) “ Music in Theatres “ was not known : They employed all “ their Art in the Worship of the Gods, “ and the Education of their Youth [*g*].” The same Author gives several Instances of Musical Education in CRETE and SPARTA ; and tells us, that “ By Music “ the young Men were taught to *abstain* “ from every thing *indecent* in *Word* and “ *Deed* ; and to observe *Decorum, Tempe-*

[*e*] See above, Art. 1.

[*f*] See Art. 12.

[*g*] PLUT. *de Musica*.

“ *rance,*

“*rance*, and Regularity [b].” Again: “Music was the Foundation of a virtuous Education; because it was allied with *Philosophy*, *Morals*, and *Heroism*: *ACHILLES* was taught by *CHIRON*, and played and sung the great *Actions* of *Heroes* [i].” Elsewhere he informs us, that “the *Spartans* in their *Songs* talked high of what *Exploits* they had performed: And that the *young Men* echoed back their *Triumphs* in their *Songs*, proclaiming their Resolution to *equal* the *Valour* of their *Forefathers* [k].”

Such was the Nature of ancient *Musick* when applied to Education; and not a mere Proficiency in the *playing* or *singing* Art, as it hath been generally misunderstood, and ignorantly ridiculed by many Moderns. Hence it was, that their greatest Captains and Statesmen studied Music, as an essential Part of Education. Thus *PERICLES* was taught by *DAMON*, who was likewise supposed to have instructed him in Politics [l]. Thus *EPAMINONDAS* was eminent in Music; though the *Roman Hi-*

[b] PLUT. *de Musica*. [i] Ibid. [k] *In Lycurgo*.  
[l] PLUT. *in Pericle*.

storian [m], who informs us of the Fact, speaks like one who knew not the Nature and Extent of Music among the earlier Greeks.

PLATO confirms these Authorities; and recites more at large the particular Method of Education used in ancient GREECE. “What then is the most proper Discipline? “Will it not be difficult to find a better, “than what was long ago established? One “Part of this is the *Gymnastic*, which relates “to the *Body*; the other is *Music*, which “relates to the *Mind*. This Discipline ought “first to begin with *Music*; and when we “speak of *Music*, we include the *Subject*, “*Words*, or *Song*. Of this there are two “Kinds, the *true* and *fabulous*. Both “ought to be applied; but the fabulous “first. Yet the *Fables* ought to be *regulated*, lest the young Mind being tinctured “with such as are improper, it should be “necessary at a more adult Age to counter- “work the first Impressions [n].” He then proceeds to a particular Detail of Fables proper and improper in the Work of Education, pointing out what ought to be ad-

[m] CORN. Nepos in *Præfat. Vit. EPAMINOND.*

[n] *De Repub.* l. ii.

mitted or rejected. In another Dialogue, he speaks again of the Remains of this Method of Instruction, which were found among the wiser Sort, even in his own Times; although in general (as will appear below [o]) *Musick* was then totally *corrupted*. “ The Parents commit their Children to the “ Care of Masters; and are more sollicitous “ about their *Morals*, than their Proficiency “ in *Learning*, or *playing* on the *Lyre*. As “ soon as they have attained a Knowledge “ of Letters, and are able to understand “ what they read, the Masters give them “ the Works of the *best Poets* to peruse and “ get by Heart, especially such as contain “ the *Praises* of their *Forefathers* renowned “ for *great Actions*, that the Boys may be “ fired with an *Emulation* to *imitate* their “ *Virtues*. The Music-Masters are above “ all Things careful to give them Habits “ of Wisdom and Temperance, and to see “ that they commit no unworthy Action. “ As soon as they have learnt to play on “ the *Lyre*, the Master proceeds to instruct “ them in the *Songs* of the most famous “ *Poets*: These they *sing* to the *Lyre*; and

[o] Art. 34, 35.

“ the Preceptors endeavour to bring their  
 “ Boys to a Love of the Rhythms and Num-  
 “ bers; that by this Discipline they may  
 “ be more *mild, modest, and orderly* in their  
 “ *Manners*, and become *useful* both in  
 “ *Speech* and *Action* [p].”

Suitable to this Method of Education is  
 PLATO's Direction in his Book of Laws.  
 “ Therefore the Legislator will take Care,  
 “ that the Youth's Mind may be so formed,  
 “ that his *Pleasures* and *Displeasures* may  
 “ *accord* to the *Laws*, and to the Taste of  
 “ *mature Age*: And if it be necessary, he  
 “ will compel the Poet to describe the *Ac-*  
 “ *tions* of *brave* and *good* Men; and to com-  
 “ pose such *Numbers* and *Harmonies* as may  
 “ be suited to the Subjects [q].”

In the same Place he assigns a particular  
 Reason for this Method of Education:  
 “ Because the youthful Mind is not apt to  
 “ attend to serious Study, therefore the  
 “ *pleasing Vehicle* of *Song* is to be admini-  
 “ stered [r].” He then proceeds even to  
 the particular moral Maxims which ought  
 to be instilled by the Poet and Musi-

[p] *In Protag.* [q] *De Legibus*, l. ii. [r] *Ibid.*



cian, on the Principles of a wise Legislator.

As these Authorities are clear and decisive, we may here properly obviate an Error of the excellent MONTESQUIEU, arising from his Misapprehension of the true Nature and Extent of ancient Music. He, with most other Writers, supposeth it to have consisted (according to the modern Acceptation of the Word) in the single Circumstance of *Melody*. In Consequence of this, when he comes to inquire why the ancient *Greeks* applied Music so universally in the Education of their Children, he says, "As they were a warlike People, and therefore in Danger of degenerating into a savage Ferocity of Manners, they employed Music, as the best Means of softening their Tempers into a milder Character; and this, because Music, of all the Pleasures of Sense, has the least Tendency to corrupt the Soul [*s*]." And so far, indeed, is true, that the ancient Greeks did consider this as one of the salutary Effects arising from the Application of Music [*t*].

[*s*] *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. iv. c. 8.

[*t*] *PLATO de Rep.* l. iii.

But

But we now find that the Matter lay much deeper: That Music, in its ancient Sense, implied not only *Melody* but *Verse* or *Song*: That it was the *established Vehicle* of all the leading *Principles* of their *Religion, Morals, and Polity*; and therefore was the natural and most important Instrument or Mean in the Education of their Children.

The learned DACIER falls into the same Error, with Respect to the wonderful Efficacy of *Music*, in the *Education* of the *Arcadians*, and the fatal Want of it among the Inhabitants of CYNÆTHE, as the Fact is recorded by POLYBIUS and ATHE-  
NÆUS. “If (says the Critic) POLYBIUS  
“speaks thus of *Music*, and if he accuseth  
“EPHORUS of having advanced a thing  
“unworthy of him, in saying that this  
“Art was invented to deceive Mankind;  
“what may we not say of *Tragedy*, of  
“which *Music* is but a *small Ornament*,  
“and which as far surpasseth *Music*, as  
“*Speech* is beyond inarticulate and un-  
“meaning Sounds [u].” In this Passage, the learned Writer evidently supposes

[u] DACIER *Poët. d'Aristote. Preface.*

that

that the ancient *Musick*, which wrought such Wonders in the Education of the *Arcadians*, was no more than mere *Melody* or *unmeaning Sound*. But the Account which both POLYBIUS and ATHENÆUS give of the musical Education of the *Arcadians*, confirms all that hath been here advanced; and proves, that it consisted in the Application of the united Powers of *Dance*, *Melody*, and *Song*.

The most learned VOSSIUS proceeds on the same Mistake in his first Book *De Natura Artium*: And continues under the Influence of this fundamental Error, through his whole Dissertation on *Musick*. As it may seem unaccountable, how so capital a Mistake should creep into the Writings of these great Authors, let me here observe, as an Apology for them all, that ARISTOTLE, and some succeeding Writers, speak of *Musick* as an Art *distinct* from *Poetry* [w]: It was therefore natural enough for these Writers to draw their Ideas of ancient Music from the great Master-Critic of GREECE. How it came to pass, that ARISTOTLE should speak

[w] *Poët passim.*

of

of these Arts as *two*, which the elder Writers considered as *one*, will clearly appear below [x]; where we shall see, that in the Time of ARISTOTLE, a Separation of the *Melody* and *poetic Song* had taken Place; that the first retained the Name of *Music*, and the second assumed that of *Poetry*.

II. "MUSIC—that is, *Melody, Dance,*  
 "and *poetic Song*, thus *united*,—acquired a  
 "great and general Power over the Minds  
 "and Actions of the ancient *Greeks*." It is presumed, that we have now gained an Assent, from whence this Truth will appear evident and indisputable; though it hath long been regarded by many, as an incredible Paradox.—How, or whence, such an universal Passion for Music should have arisen in GREECE; or, after it had arisen, how it gained such a general Establishment in the important Article of Education; or, after it was thus established, how it could work such mighty Effects upon the Mind, supposing it to consist only in mere *Melody*;—are Questions which wise Men have asked, and Bigots to Antiquity have weakly answered: For the common Reply hath

[x] Art. 35.

been,

been, that their *Musick* (meaning their *Melody*) was of a Kind so much superior to ours, that all its wonderful Effects followed from its more exalted Nature.— On the contrary, it appears, that as to its particular Construction, we are ignorant of it: That we have no precise or practicable Idea of their *Genera*, their *Modes*; nor the *Make*, nor *Power* of their *Instruments*: But by collateral Arguments we can prove that their *Melody* was something altogether *simple* and *inartificial*; because it was such as Statesmen, Warriors, and Bards, occupied in other Pursuits, could compose; and such as high and low, Children and Men busied in other concerns of Life, could learn and practise. Hence we are led to believe, that whatever Effects arose from the mere *Melody*, arose from its *Rhythm* or *Measure*, heightened by early *Association* and continued *Habit*; by which it became a Kind of natural *Language* of the Passions [y]. It appears farther, that *Melody* formed but a *Part* of the ancient *Musick*; and that its most im-

[y] For the particular Proof of all that relates to the *Melody* of the ancient *Greeks*, see the *Dissertation on Poetry and Musick*. Sect. v. p. 62, &c.

portant and essential Branch was that of *Verse* or *Song*. But for a clear and full View of the Origin and Union of their *Melody* and *poetic Song*, it was necessary to go back, and begin our Inquiries at the early Period of savage Life, in which all the Seeds and Principles of civilized Society appear in their native and uncultivated State. This Method of Investigation hath opened to us an involved and clouded Subject. Hence it appears, that *Melody*, *Dance*, and *Song*, naturally arose in *Union*; that *Measure*, *Rythm*, and *Numbers*, were the certain Consequence: That in the earliest Times of GREECE, the Characters of *Legislator* and *Bard* did often and naturally *coalesce*: That hence their earliest *Histories*, *Laws*, and *Oracles*, were of course written in *Verse*; that their religious Rites were naturally, and without positive Appointment, performed or accompanied by *Melody*, *Dance*, and *poetic Song*: That through the several improving Periods of Time, their Songs were more and more of a true legislative Cast; that they included all the great Actions of their Gods and Heroes, and that in these were contained the leading Principles of their

Reli-

Religion, Morals, and Polity : That *Musick*, in this its enlarged Sense, bore an essential and principal Part in the Education of their Children ; being the pleasing and powerful Vehicle, by which all the important Precepts of Life were instilled into their tender Minds.—Thus naturally *Poem* and *Melody* arose in Union, and were *powerfully established* in ancient GREECE : And from this View of their Nature and Establishment, their *general Influence* must unavoidably follow : “ For through the  
 “ Force of early and continued Habit,  
 “ together with the irresistible Contagion  
 “ of public Example maintained by the  
 “ general Practice of the whole Commu-  
 “ nity, who had received the same Im-  
 “ pressions in their infant State ; and  
 “ while every thing pleasing, great, and  
 “ important, was conveyed through this  
 “ Medium ; such strong Associations did  
 “ strike themselves into the Tribes of  
 “ GREECE, as naturally produced the  
 “ most lasting Effects, and such as no  
 “ future Incidents of Life could easily  
 “ weaken or efface.”

On these Principles we may naturally explain some of the recorded Effects of  
 ancient

*ancient Music*, which according to the common Interpretation of the Word, have been liable to the Derision of modern Critics.

We read, that such was the Power of ancient Music, that when AGAMEMNON went to TROY, the designing EGISTHUS could not debauch CLITEMNESTRA, till he had decoyed away the *Musician* that was retained in the Palace. This Account, if we understand by *Music* no more than *Melody*, hath much the Air of Hyperbole and Fable. But if we regard the *Musician* as what indeed he was, the Dispenser of *religious* and *moral* Principles, and that he urged the great Duty of conjugal Fidelity with the united Powers of poetic Eloquence and Song; and urged them to one whose Education had made her susceptible of such Impressions; the fabulous Appearances dissolve; and we see, that no other Method could have been devised, so effectual for the Preservation of a weak Woman's Virtue.

Again; we are told, that certain young Men heated with Wine, had agreed to assault the Doors of a modest Woman, and abuse her as a Prostitute: but that an able Musician coming past, he sung  
and



and played to them in the *Dorian* Mode; on which they were struck with Shame, and desisted from their Enterprize [z]. This, to modern Comprehension, hath still more the Air of Fable: But when the Fact is well explained, the Ridicule vanisheth with the Mystery. For every *different Subject* had a *different Mode* annexed to it. This appears at large from PLATO. “ You must adapt the Mode to the Subject and Words, not these to the Mode or Harmony: On these Matters we will farther deliberate with DAMON, what Feet or Measures are fittest to express Illiberality, Petulance, frantic Folly, and other Vices; and what Measures best express their contrary Virtues. Hence it is, that Rythm and Numbers gain their Power in the musical Education, and exercise their mighty Influence on the Passions of the Soul [a].” Tis plain, therefore, when the Historian tells us, that the Musician conquered the young Debauchees by an Application of the *Do-*

[z] This Story is ridiculed in the *Memoirs* of MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS: And the Ridicule is founded on an entire Misapprehension or Misrepresentation, of the true Nature of *ancient Music*.

[a] *De Repub.* l. iii.

*rian* Mode, he means to signify, that the Melody was accompanied by a *poetic Exhortation* suited to the Numbers; and this could be no other than a Lesson of *Modesty* and *Temperance*; which being conveyed by the pleasing Vehicle of Melody and Song, addressed to those who by the Tenor of their Education must feel its Force, and given by one whose Profession they had been taught to reverence, could hardly fail of its designed Effects, unless their Intemperance had prevented all Attention.

There are other recorded Effects of ancient Music of a similar Nature, which it is not necessary to produce here, because they may all be accounted for on the same Principle. With Respect to the traditionary Influence of this Art on *wild Beasts, Stocks, and Stones*, as it came down from the ignorant and fabulous Times, so nothing can be justly concluded from it, but the Force of *Music* over the Minds of uninstructed and wondering *Barbarians*.

Thus the boasted Power of the ancient *Greek Poem* and *Melody* seems naturally and fully accounted for. And in Confirmation of this Solution, we may finally  
appeal

appeal to the savage Tribes with whom this Inquiry began. For by Means parallel in most other Respects, save only in the Article of Legislation and Letters, they animate each other by the early and continued Use of Melody, Dance, and Song, to Valour in Arms, to Constancy in Torments and Death [b]. This is found, in Fact, to be an Education of such mighty Influence, that the *War-Song* and *Death-Song* inspire whole Tribes with a Degree of *Fury* and *Indurance*, which hath become the Astonishment of all who have *seen* but never *felt* their Power.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the Progressions of Poetry in ancient Greece.*

THE Origin, Nature, and Power, of the ancient Greek *Poem* and *Melody* being thus explained; let us now proceed to a like Application of the remaining Articles of the third Section; in which we shall endeavour to unfold the various *Progressions* of this Art in

[b] LAFITAU, tom, iii. p. 171. tom. iv. p. 9.

GREECE, and pursue it through its several Advances towards *Perfection*, to its final *Corruption* and *Decay*.

12. "The *Dance* was separated from the " *Poem* or *Song* ; and with or without " *Melody* became itself a distinct Exercise " or Art, under the Title of *Gymnastic*, for " the Sake of increasing their Strength and " Agility of Body, as the Means of rendering them invincible in War." This was the natural Effect of their warlike Character, for the Reason given above [c]. And that this was the real Generation of the *Gymnastic* Art, appears evidently from PLATO'S Book of *Laws* : where, having spoken of the three constituent Parts of a compleat *Choir* (Melody, Dance, and Song) he proceeds to deduce from these the Origin of the *Gymnastic* Art. " Is not " this the leading Principle of the *Gymnastic* Art, that every Creature is born " with a natural Inclination to leap or " bound ? But Man being endowed with " a Sense of *Rythm* or *Numbers*, naturally " formed his Motions into *Dance* : *Melody* " naturally begets *Rythm* ; and these two

[c] See Sect. iii. Art. 12.

“ united form the *Gymnastic*.—For *That* we  
 “ call the *Gymnastic*, when the *Dance* is  
 “ so artificially applied, as to improve  
 “ the Powers of the Body [*d*].” That  
 this Art was applied by the ancient *Greeks*  
 to the End of public and warlike Service,  
 is generally known: However, if it needs  
 a Proof, another Passage of the same Au-  
 thor will sufficiently confirm it. “ After  
 “ these Instructions (in *Musick*) the Parents  
 “ send their Sons to the Masters of the  
 “ *Gymnastic* Schools, that by gaining a  
 “ firm Habit of Body, which may second  
 “ a well-formed Mind, they may be able  
 “ to indure the Toils of *Enterprise* and  
 “ *War* [*e*].”

We trace the Foundation and Progress  
 of the *Gymnastic* Art no less clearly in  
 LUCIAN’S Account. “ The *Spartans*, hav-  
 “ ing received this Art (of Dancing) from  
 “ CASTOR and POLLUX, went *dancing* to  
 “ *Battle*, to the Sound of Flutes: Their  
 “ Application to Music did not lessen their  
 “ Attention to Arms: For a Musician sat  
 “ in the midst of the Assembly, and play-  
 “ ed on the Flute, beating Time with his

[*d*] *De Leg.* 1. ii.      [*e*] *In Protag.*

“Foot; while they regularly followed  
 “the Measure, in a Variety of warlike  
 “Postures [*f*].”

To confirm these Evidences, we may add another Instance of a warlike *Dance*, which approacheth nearest to the Establishment of the *Gymnastic* Exercise, of any recorded by Antiquity. XENOPHON, in his “Expedition of CYRUS,” describes one of these Dances in the following Manner. “The *Feast* being ended, the *Libations* made, and the *Hymn* sung, two *Thracians*, completely armed, began to dance to the Sound of the Flute: After skirmishing for some time with their Swords, one of them (as wounded) fell down, on which the *Paphlagonians* set up a loud Cry. The Conqueror having stripped his Adversary, departed singing his Victory.”—Here we see a near Approach to the Forms of the *Gymnastic* Exercise in their most essential Circumstances, yet the original Form of the *Dance* remains.

Thus the Origin of the *Gymnastic* Arts is clearly unfolded, as being no more than a Part of the savage *Song-Feast*;

[*f*] *De Saltatione.*

but

but separated from thence for the Ends of warlike Service. For Want of this Information, the learned VOSSIUS, among other Authors, styles the *Dance* a Branch of the *Gymnastic*, instead of regarding the *Gymnastic* as the Offspring of the *Dance* [g].

Here we may farther observe, that this View of the *Gymnastic*, considered as having been originally a Branch of the *Musical* Art, clears up a Difficulty with which every other Account of it is encumbered. Thus a late Writer says, "The Exercise of leaping in the *Pentathlon* was accompanied by *Flutes*, playing *Pythian* Airs, as PAUSANIAS informs us. Whence this Custom was derived, I cannot say: And the Reason assigned for it by that Author, which is certainly not the true one, may induce us to think, that in this Matter the Ancients were as ignorant as we [b]." But on the Principle here given, the Custom accounts for itself. In the first Institution of the *Gymnastic* Arts, it appears that *Melody* made a Part of them: This Part had been disused (by Course of

[g] *De Nat. Art.* l. i. c. 3.

[b] WEST'S *Transl.* of PINDAR'S *Odes*: *Pref.*

Time) in the *other* Exercises, but had been retained in that of *Leaping* in the *Pentathlon*.

13. "After a certain Period of Civilization, the *complex* Character of *Legislator* and *Bard* did *separate*; and were "feldom united." This Separation, it hath been shewn above, would of Course follow from decreasing Enthusiasm, and the increasing Labours of Government. And such was the natural Rise of the *aoidoi* or *Bards* of ancient GREECE: Of whose *Profession* and *Art* a late learned Author [i] hath in many Circumstances, though not in all, given a just Idea. Of its original Dignity and Importance, in the most ancient Times, he did not rightly conceive; through his Ignorance of its true Rise, and original Union with the Legislator's Office. He represents them as wandering Musicians only, who were *welcome* to the Houses of the *Great*. Such indeed they were, in the *later* Periods; when the Separation had been long formed, and their Office become rather an *Affair of Amusement* than *Utility*. But as in the earliest

[i] *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of HOMER.*



Periods the *Legislators* themselves were often *Bards*, so when the Separation of Character was first made, the known Influence and Importance of their Office could make them no other than *Assistants* to the *Magistrate*, in the high Task of governing the People. Of this we have a clear Instance in the Commonwealth of SPARTA (which maintained all its original Institutions the most pure and unchanged) where a dangerous Infurrection arose; nor could be quelled by the *Magistrate*, till the Bard TERPANDER came, and played and sung at their public Place of Congress [k].

HESIOD, who was himself of this Order, hath given us a noble Description of their Office and Dignity: Which, as it strongly confirms the Genealogy here given, I shall translate at large; together with his Picture of the *Magistrate*; along with whom the *Bard* appears to co-operate in the public Welfare, as the *second* Character in the *Community*. “Therefore Kings  
“ (Magistrates) are watchful, that they may  
“ do Justice to the Injured, at the Place of

[k] SUIDAS, on the *Lesbian Song*.

“ public Congress, soothing the Passions  
 “ of Men by persuasive Speech: The Peo-  
 “ ple reverence him as a God, while he  
 “ passes through the City.—*Kings* are from  
 “ Jove: *Bards* are from the *Muses* and the  
 “ far-shooting APOLLO. Happy is He  
 “ whom the *Muses* love: His Lips flow  
 “ with sweet and soothing Accents. If any  
 “ hath a keen and inward Grief, fresh-  
 “ rankling in his Soul; the Bard, the  
 “ *Muses* Minister, no sooner sings the  
 “ Praise of *ancient Heroes*, and the *Gods*  
 “ who inhabit OLYMPUS, than he forgets  
 “ his Sorrows, and feels no more his An-  
 “ guish.—Hail, Daughters of Jove! In-  
 “ spire *Me* with your persuasive Song [l].”

It seems probable that the original *Dig-*  
*nity* of the *Bard's* Character was always  
 maintained longer in *Commonwealths* than  
 under despotic or *kingly* Governments:  
 For at the Court of ALCINOUS, so early  
 as the Age of HOMER's Heroes, it ap-  
 pears, from the Picture given of DEMO-  
 DOCUS, to have sunk into a Character of  
*Dependance* [m]. The Reason is manifest:  
 The *Republican* Form subsists by an united

[l] HES. THEOG.      [m] *Odyss.*

Exertion of the Powers of every Rank: Under the *despotic* Rule, the Influence of these various Powers is swallowed up in the absolute Will of ONE. We shall see the Bard's Character rising again in its dignified State, in the early Periods of other barbarous Nations [n].

14. "In the Course of Time, and Progress of Polity and Arts, a *Separation* of the several *Kinds* of *Song* did arise. In the early Periods they lay confused; and were mingled in the same Composition, as Inclination, Enthusiasm, or other Incidents might impel."—This Fact is manifest enough, from the Catalogue already given of the Writings of the most ancient Bards of GREECE; for by this it appears, that they ranged at large through the Fields of Poetry and *Song*, without giving any precise or legitimate Form to their Compositions; which seem most generally to have been a rapturous Mixture of *Hymn*, *History*, *Fable*, and *Mythology*, thrown out by the enthusiastic Bard in legislative Songs, as different Motives or Occasions presented themselves, and ac-

[n] See below, Sect. vii.

according to the Exigencies or Capacity of his surrounding Audience.—“ But repeated Trial and Experiment produced a more artificial Manner ; and thus by Degrees, the several Kinds of Poem assumed their legitimate Forms.”—For the Truth of this, we refer to the following Articles.

15. “ HYMNS and *Odes* were composed, and *sung* by their Composers at their festal Solemnities.” This Species of Song hath, in the Way of Preheminence, and beyond any other, gained the Title of *lyric Poetry*. Nor can we wonder at this, if we consider, that from its Nature it must have arisen first, must have been first moulded into Form, and must, from its peculiar Genius, continue united with *Melody* longer and more universally than any other. It arose first, because it was natural for the savage Mind, to throw itself out in sudden Exclamations of Grief or Joy, Love, Revenge, or Anguish, before it could find Means or Leisure to recite at large the Occasions of these powerful Feelings : It must be first moulded into Form, because its Extent is the smallest, and its

Plan

Plan most simple: It must continue united with *Melody* longer and more universally than any other Species, because the very Essence of its Subject is that which the other Kinds only catch incidentally, I mean, the sudden Shocks and Emotions of the Soul; which are found to be the powerful Bands of Nature, by which *Melody* and *Song* are most closely bound together.

PLUTARCH confirms this Reasoning concerning the *Priority* of the *hymnal* Species; and says, that “Music was *first* used “in religious Ceremonies, being employed “in the *Praises* of the *Gods*; and that *afterwards* it was applied to *other* Subjects [o].” Accordingly we find, that in the several successive Periods, ALCÆUS, STESICHORUS, TYRTÆUS, and others, composed and sung their *Odes* at the public Festivals. The sublime PINDAR was not more celebrated for his mighty Strains, than for his powerful Performance of them at the *Olympic Games*: Nay, so high was his Fame in this Regard, that he had a Chair appropriated to him in the Temple of DELPHI, where he poured forth the Torrent of his

[o] *De Musica.*

Songs,

Songs, which were attended to, and revered as Oracles issuing from the Inspiration of the God:

16. "The *Epic* Poem arose ; and was sung by its Composers at their festal "Solemnities."—When the first Fire of Enthusiasm had vented itself in the Rapture of *Hymns* and *Odes*, it naturally assumed a more *sedate* Manner ; and found Time to *relate* at large those Actions which in it's first Agitations it could only celebrate by sudden Bursts of Passion and Praise. Accordingly, we find many of the elder Poets of GREECE mixing the *hymnal* and *enthusiastic* with the *historic* or *narrative* Species. The Exploits of BACCHUS, the Rape of PROSERPINE, the Wars of the TITANS, were among their favourite Themes. After these, came the Authors of the *Herculiad* and *Thebiad* : DEMODOCUS, prior to HOMER, sung the Ambush of the *Trojan Horse* : PHEMIUS sung the Return of the *Greeks* under AGAMEMNON : The *little Iliad* comprised most of the subsequent Adventures of the *Trojan War*. A *Thebaid* was also written, the Author of which is not certainly known ; though PAUSANIAS tell us, it was

was by many ascribed to HOMER [p]. As Example, Habit, and improving Arts and Polity, are the necessary Means of Progress in every Art, so these Accounts, though imperfectly conveyed to us (because the Poems they allude to are lost) sufficiently imply, that the *Epic* Muse advanced *gradually* towards Perfection; till at length she appeared in full Splendor, in the Person of her favoured HOMER.

HERODOTUS, indeed, has thrown out a Hint, as if the *Iliad* was prior to the oldest of the Poems ascribed to these most ancient Bards [q]. VELLEIUS PATERCULUS affirms the same thing in stronger Terms [r]: And Mr. POPE goes into this Opinion [s]. It must be confessed, the History of these remote Ages is so dark and fabulous, that nothing can with Certainty be collected from them. But the very Structure of HOMER's Poem carries in itself such an internal Evidence, as turns the Scale against the Historian's Conjecture. If we consider the Nature of the human Mind, we shall be led to be-

[p] L. ix. [q] In EUTERPE. [r] L. i. c. 5.

[s] Diss. prefixed to his Transf. of the *Iliad*.

lieve, that the *Epic* Poem must have received a *gradual* Improvement through that long though unknown Tract of Time, during which its unpolished Rudiments existed before the Age of HOMER. The mere Powers of *Fancy* and *Execution* may, indeed, arrive at their highest Perfection by the Efforts of a *single Mind*: For what belongs to Nature only, Nature only can complete; and thus our immortal SHAKESPEAR arose: But that an *Epic* PLAN, so *complex*, so *vast*, and yet so *perfect* as that of the *Iliad*; which requires an uncommon Penetration even to comprehend in all its Variety and Art; which the thoughtful, the literate, the polished VIRGIL attempted to rival, and only proved his utter Inability by his Attempt; which succeeding Poets have made their Model, yet none have ever equalled or approached, save only the all-comprehending Mind of the sublime MILTON;—that such a Plan as This, which required the highest Efforts of an improved Understanding, opened and strengthened by a Succession of preceding Examples, should at once emerge in all the Extent of Art, in the midst of rude and unformed Fables,



Fables, sung at Festivals as vague Enthusiasm might inspire ;—this is an Opinion repugnant to all our Notices concerning the Progress of the Powers of the human Mind. We may as rationally suppose that ST. PAUL's was the first built Temple, its *Organ* the first musical Instrument, the LAOCOON and his Sons the first Attempt in Statuary, the *Transfiguration* the first Essay in Picture, as that the *stupendous Iliad*, the Wonder of all succeeding Ages, was the *first* Attempt in *Epic* Poetry.

What the Nature of the Thing so strongly declares, ARISTOTLE seems to confirm in his Poetics : For he says, that “ although we know not the Names either of the Poems or their Authors ; yet there is Reason to believe that many had been written before HOMER ; and that his *Margites* brought this Species to its Perfection, in the same Manner as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* had compleated the Form of the Epic Poem [t].”

We may reasonably conclude, therefore, that from the Days of LINUS, down to those of HOMER, there had been a Suc-

[t] *Poet.* c. iv.

cession of Writers, among whom the Form of the *Epic* Poem had been *gradually* advancing towards Perfection, till it received its full Completion in the Birth of the *Iliad*.

That these Epic Songs, in their several Periods, were sung by their Composers to the surrounding People, we have the general Testimony of ancient Writers. This Fact is so clear, with Respect to the elder Poets of GREECE, that it is questioned by some whether ever their Songs were committed to *Writing*: Whether they were any more than the extempore Efforts of a sudden Enthusiasm, kindled by the sympathetic Power of *religious Rites*, or *State-Festivals*. That HOMER followed the honourable Profession of a *Bard*, and sung his own Poems at the public Feasts, hath been proved at large by a learned Writer [u]. HESIOD was of the same Order; and seems to have maintained it with truer Dignity [w]. TERPANDER held the same Employment, and sung both his own Poems and those of HOMER [x].

17. "From an *Union* of these two Kinds, "a certain rude Outline of *Tragedy* arose."

[u] *Life* of HOMER, Sect. vii, viii. [w] THEOG. *Exord.* ver. 23, &c. [x] PLUTARCH *de Musica*.

—For when a Bard sung the great or terrible Atchievements of a Heroe or God, the surrounding *Audience*, fired to Enthusiasm, and already prepared by a correspondent Education, would naturally break forth into the Raptures of a *choral Song*.

—This Progression of Poetry is so natural, that it is Matter of Astonishment to hear the Learned at all Times ascribing the Rise of Tragedy to Causes merely accidental; and confining it to the single Adventure of *THESPIS* and his Route, singing the Praises of *BACCHUS* at a *casual* Vintage. Thus *DACIER*, among others, affirms roundly, that “the first dramatic Person which *THESPIS* *invented*, was only *designed* to give Respite to the Choir; and what he recited was no more than an Appendage to Tragedy [y].” In the same Manner the sensible and learned *BRUMOY* delivers at large the common System, with Respect to the Birth and Progress of the *tragic* Species [z]. All this is in Contradiction to the Workings of Nature; and, without

[y] *Sur les Poet D'Arist.* p. 47.

[z] *Theat. des Grecs*, tom. vi. p. 310, &c.

Proof, supposes That to be a *casual Invention* in a *particular Instance*, which was indeed the *natural Progress* of Passion expressed by *Melody, Dance, and Song*. We have seen, that an Union of Narration and concurrent Shouts of Praise takes Place even in the rude Festivals of the savage Tribes : 'Tis altogether natural, then, to suppose, when *Letters* had given Accents to the Rapture of the surrounding Audience, and moulded the Ode into Form, that this Union which Nature had established, should be upheld. Though, therefore, the first Rise and Progress of the tragic Species in GREECE were hid in Darkness, through a Want of recording History, yet, from a Similarity of Causes and Effects which we find among the barbarous Nations of AMERICA, we might fairly conclude, that it had not a *casual*, but a *certain Rise* from *Nature* ; according to the Principles here given.

But ancient History is not silent on this Subject. It gives us a Variety of Facts, which overturn the common System, and tend to confirm what is here advanced. PLATO says expressly, that  
 “ Tragedy

“ Tragedy was very ancient in the City  
 “ of ATHENS, and performed there, long  
 “ before the Age of THESPIs [a].” We  
 are assured, on the Authority of other  
 Writers, that “ a Report prevailed in  
 “ GREECE, that certain tragic Poets  
 “ had in ancient Times contended at the  
 “ Tomb of THESEUS [b].” SUIDAS even  
 mentions EPIGENES by Name, *one* tra-  
 gic Poet, out of *fifteen*, who were prior to  
 the Age of THESPIs.

But a still stronger Evidence presents  
 itself: For even the very *Substance* and  
*Form* of one of these rude Outlines of  
*savage Tragedy* remains in several respec-  
 table Authors of Antiquity: I mean, in  
 their Accounts of the Celebration of the

[a] MINOS.

[b] This is asserted by SCALIGER, in the clearest  
 Terms; and is alledged by him as a Proof of the  
 Existence of Tragedy, before the Age of THESPIs.  
 “ Tragediam vero esse Rem antiquam constat ex Hif-  
 “ toria: ad THESEI namque Sepulchrum certasse Tra-  
 “ gicos legimus:” (De Poet. l. i. c. 5.) On what Au-  
 thority he says this, I know not. If any ancient Au-  
 thor hath asserted it, this Contest must have been held at  
 the Place where the Remains of THESEUS had been in-  
 terred before they were brought to ATHENS by CIMON;  
 for that Event happened in the Time of SOPHOCLES.

*Pythian Games.* These were first celebrated in the Times of APOLLO himself, and contained a mimetic Narration, by poetic Song, Melody, and Dance, of his Victory over the *Python*. This Representation was called the *Pythian Nomos* ; and underwent the following Changes or Improvements through several successive Periods of Antiquity. “ The Poem called “ *Nomos* had APOLLO for it's Subject ; “ and took it's Name from *Him* : For “ APOLLO was stiled *Nomimos*, because “ in ancient Times, when the whole *Choir* “ used to sing the *Nomos* to the *Pipe* or “ *Lyre*, CHRYSOTHEMIS the *Cretan* was “ the first who, clad in a splendid Robe, “ and playing on the Harp, sung the “ *Nomos* alone, in Imitation of APOLLO's “ Victory ; and being much applauded, “ this Form of the Contest remained to “ *After-Ages* [c].” What this Form was, we

[c] Certamen apud Delphos antiquitus fuit Citharædorum, Pæanem in Laudem Dei canentium. *Strabo* L. ix.

*Nomos* quidem in Apollinem conscriptus ; a quo Appel-  
lationem sumpsit. Apollo enim *nomimos* appellatus est,  
quia *Veteribus Choros constituentibus*, & ad Tibiam vel  
*Lyram Nomon canentibus*, Chrysothemis Cretensis primus  
stola

we learn from the following Accounts. The Poem was divided into *five Parts* or *Acts*. “The first contained the *Pre-*“*paration* for the Fight; the second, the “Challenge; the third exhibited the Fight “itself; the fourth, the *Victory* of APOL- “LO; the fifth contained the *Triumph* of “the God, who *danced* after his Victory “[*d*].”—“It appears that TERPANDER “improved the *Nomos*, by adding the *he-*“*roic Measure*: After Him, ARION inlarg- “ed it greatly; being both a *Poet* and “a *Performer* on the *Harp*. PHRYNES “introduced a *new Circumstance*; for he “joined the *Hexameter* with the *vari-*

*stola usus insigni, & accepta Cithara, Apollinem imitatus* (the Original is stronger; εἰς μίμησιν τε Ἀπολλωνος) *solus cecinit Nomon*: qui cum valde probatus esset, permanfit hic Modus Certaminis. *Proclus apud Photium. Bibl. Ed. Hoesch. p. 982.*

[*d*] Pythici vero nomi, qui Tibia canitur, partes quinque sunt; Rudimentum, Provocatio, Iambicum, Spondeum, Ovatio. Representatio autem est Modus quidem Pugnæ Apollinis contra Draconem.—Et in ipso Experimento Locum circumspicit, num Pugnæ conveniens sit:—In Provocatione vero, provocat Draconem:—Sed in Iambico pugnat:—Spondeum vero Dei Victoriâ representat:—et in Ovatione, Deus ad victorialia Carmina saltat.—*Jul. Pollux. Onom. l. iv. c. 10.*

“*ous Measure [e].*”—In a later Period, this poetic and musical Representation was “formally established at DELPHI, after “the *Crissæan War [f].*” Afterwards the Amphictyons added a Contest of *Musick merely instrumental [g]*; but preserved what had been practised in former Times: “There was the *Song* to the *Harp*, as “*formerly*; there was the *Song* to the *Tibia* “or *Pipe*; and there was the *Pipe* itself “*without Song [h].*” This Addition of *Musick merely instrumental* was likewise *imitative*; being designed as a *mimetic Description*, by mere *Melody*, of the Battle between APOLLO and the *Python*. It consisted likewise of five Parts, corresponding with

[e] Terpandrum vero Nomon absolvisse apparet, cum adhibuisset heroicum Carmen: Post, Arion Methymnæus non parum auxit, Poeta ipse & Citharædus. Phrynes vero Mitylenæus novam Rationem commentus est: Hexametrum enim cum soluto Carmine conjunxit. *Proclus apud Photium*: ib.

[f] Institutum a Delphis post *Crissæum Bellum*.

[g] Adjecerunt autem Citharædis Tibicines, et qui Cithara luderent *sine cantu*, modularenturque Carmen, quod Nomos sive Modus Pythius dicebatur.--*Strabo*, l. ix.

[h] Certamina instituerunt Amphictyones; Cantus ad Citharam, ut pridem: Cantus item ad Tibiam; ipsarum etiam per se Tibiarum.--*Pausanias*; in *Phocicis*.

those



those of the ancient Song [i].—"TIMOTHENES, in the Time of the second  
 "Ptolemy, writ a Poem descriptive and  
 "explanatory of this musical Contention:  
 "According to this Author, the Subject  
 "was the Victory of APOLLO over the  
 "Serpent. The first Part was the Prelude  
 "to Battle; the second was the Beginning  
 "of the Engagement; the third was the  
 "Battle itself; the fourth was the Pæan  
 "or Triumph on the Victory; the fifth  
 "was an Imitation of the Agonies and His-  
 "sing of the dying Serpent [k]."

Now, though these ancient Authors differ from each other in two or three trifling Circumstances; yet, as to every thing *essential*, they *perfectly agree*. And from  
 their

[i] Quinque sunt ejus Partes; anacrusis, ampeira, katakaeleusmos, Iambi & Dactyli, syringes seu Fistulæ sibilæ. *Strabo. ib.*

[k] Carmen composuit Timosthenes secundi Ptolemæi Classi Præfectus:—Vult autem Apollinis adversus Draconem Certamen celebrari eo Carmine: & anacrusin significare Præludium; ampeiran Certaminis Initium; katakaeleusmon ipsam Pugnam; Iambum & Dactylum Pæanem qui Victoriæ acciniter, talibus Modis, sive Rythmis, quorum Hymnus quidem proprius est; Iambus autem (*desunt quædam*) & iambizare; Fistulas autem Mortem imitatas Serpentis,

their concurrent Evidence, we have clear Proof of the following Facts. 1. That the immediate Followers of APOLLO began these *poetic* and *musical* Contests. 2. That till CHRYSOTHEMIS appeared (in, or near the Time of APOLLO) there subsisted only a *Choir*. 3. That He first sung the *Episode*, single and alone. 4. That his Song was a *mimetic Narration*, or *Imitation* of APOLLO's Victory. 5. That the *Form* which He gave to This, *continued* through succeeding Times. 6. That this Poem was divided into *five Parts* or *Acts*, containing a *progressive Description* and *Imitation* of the Battle and Victory. And lastly, that *Songs of Triumph, Exultation, Sarcasm, and Contempt*, together with a *correspondent Dance*, accompanied the *narrative Episode*. [1].

Thus,

Serpentis, Vitam cum Sibilis quibusdam finientis. *Strabo*. ib.—These Passages are given in the Latin Translations (which, though not always elegant, are sufficiently correct) that a greater Number of Readers may be enabled to judge of the Evidence.

[1] SCALIGER is of Opinion, that the *Dance* was *mimetic* of the *whole Narration* or *Action*, and divided into the same Number of *Acts*. “ At vero seorsum Saltatio  
“ *haud illi abſimilis edebatur, in totidem Actus æque distri-*  
“ *buta.*”

Thus, in this most ancient *Pythian Song*, as delivered down from the Times of APOLLO himself, and performed and augmented through the succeeding Periods of ancient GREECE, we have the very *Substance* and *Form* of a first rude Essay towards Tragedy, divided into *five Acts*, and compounded of *poetic Narration*, *imitative Music*, *Dance*, and *Choral Song*.—And it is worthy of singular Observation, that through this whole representative Scene, of APOLLO *singing, dancing, and praising his own Exploits*; the ancient Greek Historians transport us, as it were, into the Wilds of *modern America*; and present to us the *genuine Picture* of a *savage Chieftain* [*m*].

It appears, therefore, that Tragedy had a much earlier and deeper Foundation in ancient GREECE, than the accidental Adventure of THESPIS and his Route: That

“buta.” Poet. l. i. c. 23. If indeed this was added, it amounts to a strict *dramatic Representation*. For, as the same learned Critic says elsewhere, “Sane Ludi sunt tantæ Fabulæ; Fabulæ vero Ludi loquentes.” ib. c. xxii. But as this Circumstance is not so clearly delivered as the rest, I lay no Stress on it.

[*m*] See the Description of the savage Song Feast, from LAFITAU. Sect. ii.

it arose from *Nature*, and an unforced *Union* and *Progreſſion* of *Melody*, *Dance*, and poetic *Song*.

At the ſame Time it is manifeſt, that THESPIſ added *ſomething* to the rude and ſavage Form of Tragedy, as it exiſted in his Age. 'Tis probable that He was the *firſt* *Declaimer* or *Interlocutor* to his own *Choir*; nay, perhaps, was the firſt in ancient GREECE who compleatly changed the *narrative* *Episode* into the *dramatic* *Form*; that he firſt eſtabliſhed the *Profeſſion* of a *Player* in ATTICA, and firſt tranſported his *Company* from one Village to another; whereas, before his Time, the Exhibitions of the rude tragic Scene had been fixed, and merely *incidental* [n]. This Inſtitution of an itinerant Company muſt neceſſarily increaſe the general Attention of ATTICA to theſe rude tragic Scenes: the Change of the *narrative* into the *dramatic* *Form* might naturally induce SOLON to tax THESPIſ with being a *Liar* (υποκριτής): And hence the Opinion ſeems firſt to have ariſen, that THESPIſ was the *Inventor* of this Species [o].

18. " In

[n] HOR. Ep. ad Pis.—DIOG. LAERT. SOLON.

[o] The

18. "In Process of Time, this barbarous Scene improved into a more perfect Form: Instead of *relating*, they *presented* by an *assumed Character*, and "by *Action* and *Song*, those great or terrible Achievements which their Heroes "had performed." How soon the savage Tribes fall into this Kind of dramatic Representation, we have already seen [*p*]:

[*p*] The most learned BENTLEY fell into the common System, with Regard to the Rise of Tragedy: Attempting to prove, that THESPIS was its *Inventor*. Thus, for Want of the true *Data*, and from an Unacquaintance with Man in his savage State, this great Critic hath thrown out a Chain of Errors: While, if he had been led up to the true Fountains of Information, he would probably have caught the various Progressions of Poetry at a Glance.

Mr. BOYLE, in his Examination of BENTLEY's Dissertation, seems once or twice to get out of the common Track of Criticism on this Subject: Yet, for Want of knowing the true Origin of Tragedy, as founded in human Nature, he throws little or no Light upon the Question. He insists, that Tragedy is more ancient than THESPIS, on the Authority of PLATO and LAERTIUS: But he falls again into the vulgar Track, in affirming, that till the Time of THESPIS, the *Episod* had no Existence, but only the *Choir*. In Confutation of which Opinion we have now shewn, that the full Form of savage Tragedy had appeared many Ages before, in the ancient Celebration of the *Pythian Games*.

[*p*] Above, Sect. ii.

How

How natural such a Progression of Art must be to the human Mind, will appear by reflecting, that dramatic *Action* is but another Mode of *Narration* ; and that even the *Narration* of the savage Tribes is found to have such a Mixture of *Action* in it, as strongly tends to produce the dramatic Imitation [q]. Time, therefore, and repeated Efforts must naturally advance the *narrative Episode* into *personal Representation*. And thus we are arrived at the Form which Tragedy wore at ATHENS, when the inventive Genius of ESCHYLUS advanced the Art one Step higher ; and by adding a *second Person* to the Drama, brought in the Use of *Dialogue*.

Here, for the Sake of Truth, we must again depart from the general Body of Critics ; most of whom, from ARISTOTLE down to our own Times, unite in supposing that ESCHYLUS was only a casual Imitator of HOMER, and drew the Idea of all his Tragedies from the ILIAD. A noble Critic of our own Country hath affirmed this in the fewest and strongest Terms ; and says, that “ There was no

[q] Above, Sect. ii.

“ more left for Tragedy to do after him  
“ (HOMER) than to erect a Stage, and  
“ draw his Dialogues and Characters into  
“ Scenes [r].”

It may be deemed presumptuous, perhaps, to question a Point wherein the great Master-Critic of GREECE hath himself decided. But let us remember, that the Days are now past, when it was held a Point of Honour, to *swear* to the *Opinions* of a *Master*. ARISTOTLE is often admirable, generally judicious, yet sometimes perhaps mistaken, even in his Judgment of Men and Things relative to his own Country. He was more especially capable of being misled by the common Opinion in this Point ; in which neither He nor any of his Countrymen could be sufficiently informed, for Want of a competent Knowledge of the Genius and Character of savage Manners.

That ESCHYLUS was not a mere Imitator of HOMER, that he was a great and original Poet, who exalted his Art one Degree beyond his Predecessors in his own Country, seems a Point which collateral

[r] *Characteristics*, vol. i. p. 197.

Arguments strongly confirm. We are informed, in general Terms, that there were no less than sixteen tragic Poets who writ before him: And the Probability is much stronger, that he should draw his Improvement from the *scenic* Representations already established, in which he found one dramatic Person and an accompanying *Choir*, which incidentally stood in the Place of a second Person, and often sustained a Kind of Dialogue with the principal Interlocutor [s]; than that he should have Recourse to HOMER's Poems, in which no dramatic Representation was to be found.

To this Argument may be added another, drawn from the Style and Manner of ESCHYLUS, so different from that of HOMER. For HOMER is equal, large, flowing, and harmonious: ESCHYLUS is uneven, concise, abrupt, and rugged: The one leads you through the grand

[s] This Opinion receives a strong Confirmation from the following Circumstance, that in the *Greek Tragedies* which have come down to us, whenever there is a *single Interlocutor* on the Stage, the *Choir* frequently maintains a *Dialogue* with him.—Concerning the *original Nature* of the *Choir*, see below Art. xix. Note.

but



but gentle Declivities of Hill and Dale; the other carries you over a continued Chain of Rocks and Precipices. Now if HOMER had been the Model of ESCHYLUS, some *Similarity* of Manner would probably have ensued.

A third and still stronger Proof arises from the essential Difference of their Subjects, both in Extent and Nature: In Extent, because the one is of *long*, the other of *short* Duration: In Nature, because HOMER'S Poems are chiefly employed in the Exhibition of *Character* and *Manners*; those of ESCHYLUS in the Representation of *Terror* and *Distress*. Had he been that mere Imitator of HOMER which the Critics have adjudged him, and had nothing to do but to erect a Stage, and to draw HOMER'S Dialogues into Scenes, he would have been content to have taken his Subjects from the *Iliad*, and, according to HORACE'S sober Rule, have never ventured beyond the Siege of *Troy* [t]. He would have brought upon the Stage the Anger of ACHILLES, the Battle of PARIS and MENELAUS, the Parting of HECTOR

[t] RECTIUS ILIACOS, &c.

and ANDROMACHE, the Feats of DIO-  
MEDE; and would have contrasted the  
*Strength* of AJAX with the *Cunning* of  
ULYSSES. Nothing of all this appears:  
On the contrary, his *Subjects* and *Manner*  
are equally *his own*; and *both* of a Ge-  
nius opposite to those of HOMER [u].

What PLUTARCH says of HOMER,  
though brought for the contrary Purpose,  
tends to confirm all that is here ad-  
vanced. “Even Tragedy took its Rise  
“from HOMER : For his Poems com-  
“prehend every thing that is *sublime*  
“and *great* [w].” This, you will say, is  
a very insufficient Reason, because the  
Critic forgets the *pathetic* and the *terri-*

[u] It is said, indeed, of ESCHYLUS, that he called  
his Tragedies no more than “Fragments of the magni-  
“ficent Entertainment given by HOMER.” Now this Ex-  
pression being only *metaphorical*, we ought to interpret it in  
that Sense only, to which a Comparison of their Writings  
leads us. And, as it appears that there is no Resemblance  
between them, either in the *particular Subjects*, or in the  
*Manner* of treating them; the only rational Interpretation  
that can be given, seems to be this; “that the Subjects  
“of his Tragedies were only small *Morsels* or *Fragments*  
“of the *Grecian Story*; whereas HOMER had given a  
“*general System* of their fabulous History, both in a more  
“*extensive* and a more *connected* Manner.

[w] *In Vita HOMERI.*

*ble,*

ble, which were the essential Constituents of the Greek Tragedy. But mark the Sequel; which is still more extraordinary. "Neither do they (HOMER's Poems) contain Descriptions of those *atrocious Actions* which have been feigned by the later Tragedians, such as *Incest*, and the *Murder of Parents or Children*. Nay, whenever he happens to touch on any thing of this Kind, he always *softens* and throws it *into Shades* [x]." Thus while PLUTARCH is labouring to prove, that the Greek Tragedy was *drawn* from HOMER, he proves, that HOMER's Poems were *destitute* of that which was of the *Essence* of the Greek Tragedy.

SCALIGER is a venerable Exception to the general Body of the Critics on this Subject; and seems to have viewed the Question in its true Light. "In the *Iliad* (saith he) there is nothing like the *Progression* of a Tragedy, if you take the *whole* together: For, from Beginning to End, there is a *perpetual Succession* of *Deaths*: He begins with a Pestilence, which destroys more Men than the

[x] *In Vita HOMERI.*

“whole War [y].” The Critic then goes on to prove, by a large Enumeration of Circumstances, the *Iliad* hath very few of the essential Characteristics of *Tragedy*.

We may fairly conclude, then, that the Improvement which Tragedy received from ESCHYLUS was not *casual*, but the Result of a *natural Progression*: That he drew not from HOMER’S Poems, as a mere Imitator; but exalted his Art one Step higher, from the Force of true *Genius* in the *tragic* Species.

What followed is well known: SOPHOCLES added a *third* Person to the Drama: And by this Improvement is said by the Critics to have *completed* the Form of Tragedy. The Truth of their Decision I much doubt: But this Disquisition lies beyond the Limits of our present Enquiry.

19. “As the Choir was established by Nature and Custom, and animated their Solemnities by *Dance* as well as *Song*; the Melody, Dance, and Song, did of Course regulate each other; and the Ode or Song naturally fell into *Stanzas* of some *particular* Kind.” This arose by an easy Progression from the savage

State; where “ they who dance, go round  
 “ in a circular Movement, and after a  
 “ short Interval begin a second [z].” The  
*Greeks* not only fell into this Manner, but  
 improved upon it : They went round, first  
 to the one Hand, then to the other, and  
 then paused. The Learned have found  
 out mystical Reasons for these circular  
 Movements ; referring them to the Mo-  
 tion of the Planets [a]. Much Labour  
 cannot be necessary for the Confutation  
 of these Refinements, as the Practice arose  
 so evidently from the Dictates of Nature :  
 It was a natural and sensible Improve-  
 ment ; for the plain Reason of *preventing*  
*Giddiness*, which ariseth from running  
 round in the same Circle.

Let us attend, therefore, to its Conse-  
 quences. As each *Dance* or *Return* was  
 marked by it's peculiar *Measure*, this of  
 Course fixed both the *Melody* and poetic  
*Numbers* of the accompanying Song : And  
 as they likewise sung during the *Interval*  
 of *Rest*, we see, that from this easy Im-  
 provement on the savage Song-Feast, the

[z] See Sect. ii. [a] ATHENÆUS *Deip.* l. i.

*Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epode, naturally arose [b].*

20. Ano-

[b] By thus tracing the tragic *Choir* to it's true Foundation, the *savage Song-Feast*; we are now inabled to give a clear and easy Solution to a Difficulty which hath embarrassed all the Critics. It hath been held a Circumstance unaccountable or absurd, that the *Choir*, in several of the ancient *Greek Tragedies*, should be made privy to some of the most *atrocious Designs*, and yet should not *reveal* them, though it's *Character* was confessedly *moral*. This indeed, on the common Supposition, that the *Choir originally* made an essential Part of the *dramatic Persons*, is a thorough Absurdity. But in Reality it appears in the *savage Song-Feast*, that they who *recite* or *represent* the *Action*, are a *Body* quite distinct from the *Choir*; and that the *Choir*, in it's *original State*, is indeed the *Audience* who surround the *Narrator* or *Actor*, and answer him at every *Pause*, with Shouts of *Triumph, Approbation, or Dislike*. This being so, how could they (the *Choir* or *Audience*) properly *reveal* any secret *Designs*, either good or bad?—To whom should they *reveal* them? To each other?—This was needless, because they knew them already.—Must they, then, reveal them to the *Actors* of the Drama? This could only have confounded the Representation, and destroyed the Plot. It would have been precisely on a Level with the Practice of an honest Country Lad, who was present at the Representation of OTHELLO: When he foresaw, that IAGO's Treachery was likely to end tragically for poor DESDEMONA, he called aloud to OTHELLO, “*Sir, the Rascal lies: he stole the Handkerchief himself.*”—This naturally leads to the Elucidation of another Circumstance. In the Beginning of  
the

20. "Another Consequence of the established *Choir* was a strict and unvaried Adherence to the *Unities* of *Place* and *Time*." This Effect is so manifest as to need little Illustration. A nu-

## I 4

merous

the Time of *ESCHYLUS*, the *Choir* consisted of no less than fifty Persons: Afterwards the Number was lessened to fifteen. How came it to pass, that in the more barbarous Periods the Number should be so much greater? Manifestly (on the Principles here given) because *that* rude Age bordered on the *savage* Times, when the whole Audience had sympathized with the narrative Actor, and became as one general Choir.

This Solution naturally clears up another Circumstance, which is unaccountable on the common System. If the Choir were originally a Part of the dramatic Actors, why were they placed in a Balcony or Gallery, separate from the Stage? No good Reason can be assigned. But if we suppose them to have been originally the Spectators of the Drama, we see they were in their natural and proper Situation.

But to this it may be objected, "that the Choir sometimes maintains a Dialogue with the Actor, in the Greek Tragedies; and ought therefore to be regarded as a dramatic Person."—To this (which hath been observed above) it is reply'd, that though the Choir sometimes speaks, yet this is only by it's Leader, and then only occasionally, and from Necessity, to fill the Place of another Actor, when no more than one or two are upon the Stage. For this Reason *ESCHYLUS* uses the Expedient oftener than his Successors, because his dramatic Persons were fewer. But though the Choir sometimes speak by their Leader,

merous *Choir*, maintaining their Station through the whole Performance, gave so forcible a Conviction to the Senses, of the *Sameness* of *Place*, and the *Shortness* of *Time*, that any Deviation from this apparent Unity must have shocked the Imagination with an Improbability too gross to be indured. Notwithstanding all the Panegyrics of the Critics, therefore, upon the Greek Tragedians on Account of these *Unities*; it is evident, they arose in the rudest Periods; and were continued through the more polished Ages, on the

*Leader*, yet they never take Part in the *Action*; as sufficiently appears by their not revealing the Secrets of it.

It may be urged again, that in the *Eumenides* and *Iketides* of *ESCHYLUS*, the *Choir* is certainly to be considered as a *dramatic Person*, because they are indeed the *chief Actors* in the Drama. True; they are so: but though this Objection looks formidable, yet on a deeper Consideration, the Bugbear will vanish.—*ESCHYLUS* was desirous to represent an Action of *fifty Furies*, and another of *fifty Danaids*, at a Time when only *two dramatic Persons* were allowed by Custom to come on the Stage together. What Expedient could he use? Why, surely, no other than That which we find he *hath* used: To throw these *numerous Bodies* into the Form of a *Choir*; and thus he gained them Admittance on the Stage.—To speak with Precision, therefore, we ought to say, that the Action of these two Tragedies passeth *without a Choir*; that is, without any supposed *Spectators* who take no Part in it.

same



same Principle of untaught Nature and established Custom.

21. "Not only the Part of the tragic *Choir*, but the *Episode*, or *interlocutory* Part was also *Sung*." The most sensible of the Critics have ever regarded this as a Circumstance equally unnatural and unaccountable. Thus DACIER speaks. "It must be owned, that we cannot well comprehend, how Music (*Melody*) could ever be considered as in any Respect making a Part of Tragedy : For if there be any thing in the World that is at Variance with *tragic Action*, it is *Song* [c]." The learned Critic is so shocked with this supposed Union, in Appearance so unnatural, that upon the whole he questions its Existence ; and is of Opinion, that when ARISTOTLE speaks of *Music*, as being annexed to *Tragedy*, he speaks of the *Choir* only [d]. This, however, is contrary to the united Voice of Antiquity, which universally admits the Fact, though its Origin was never accounted for. But how naturally this Union took Place in ancient Tragedy, we now clearly disco-

[c] *Sur* ARISTOTE, p. 85, &c. [d] *Ibid.*

ver, by investigating the Rise and Progress of this Poem from the savage State. For it appears, that the *Epic* and *Ode* were both sung from the earliest Periods; and therefore, when they became *united*, and by that Union formed the tragic Species, they of Course maintained the same Appendage of *Melody*, which Nature and Custom had already given them.

The *Abbé du Bos* endeavours to prove, indeed, that the *Song* which was employed in the *Episode* of ancient Tragedy was no more than a Kind of *regulated* or *measured Declamation* [e]. But his Inquiries are partial; for he goes no higher than to the Practice of the *Romans*: And it is probable, from several Circumstances, that in the late Period when the *Romans* borrowed their Music from the *Greeks*, the Tragic *Song* had been brought down from a *measured Melody* to a Kind of *regulated Declamation*. Thus Tully mentions the *Cantus Subobscurus*; and again saith, “*Declatiores sunt falsæ Vocolæ quam certæ et severæ.*” But though these, with several other Arguments alledged by the *Abbé*, seem to imply that the tragic *Song*

[e] *Reflec. Crit.* Part iii. c. 4, &c.

was little more than a measured Recitation ; yet this will by no Means prove, that a more full and direct Song had not been used in Tragedy through the more early Periods. In the Course of this Dissertation, the Practice of *singing* Tragedy hath been traced from its first Rise in savage Manners ; which at once destroys the *Improbability* of the Custom, and proves that it was even founded in Nature ; a Circumstance, of which the *Abbé* had not the least Suspicion. This Foundation being laid, we cannot but listen attentively to what the Writers of GREECE tell us on this Subject : Now these unite in informing us, that the *Episode* of Tragedy was *Sung* ; and even name the *Modes* of Music which were appropriated to the *Episode* in Contradistinction to the *Choir* [*f*]. That the *Song* should approach nearer, by Degrees, to mere Declamation, will appear probable, when we consider the gradual Separations which successively took Place in the musical Art, during the successive Periods of GREECE and ROME. To mention only one Instance here, similar to what we now treat of : ARISTO-

[*f*] ARISTOT. *Prob.* 19.

THE informs us, that in *His* Time the *Rhapsodists*, whose Profession it was to *sing* the Poems of HOMER and HESIOD, were beginning to make Inroads into the ancient Practice; and now *recited* those Poems, which in former Times had been always *sung* [g].

The *Abbé* falls into an Error with Respect to the *Dance*, parallel to that which he adopts with Regard to the *Melody* of the Ancients. As he insists that their *tragic Melody* was only a *measured Recitation*, so he affirms, that their *tragic Dance* was no more than *Action* [b]. It is true, that in the later Periods of *Rome*, when the musical Separations had taken Place, this was the general Meaning of the Word *Saltatio*: And hence, as in his Opinion of the tragic Song, his Mistake arose. For it is evident from the concurrent Testimony of the elder *Greek Writers*, that the *tragic Dance* was performed in the very Manner here described. We now see, that this *Dance* (no less than the *tragic Song*) arose from untaught Nature; and that it was the genuine Parent of the *Strophe*, *Antistrophe*, and *Epode*.

[g] *Poët.* c. 26. [b] *Reflec.* Part iii. c. 13.

22. "As the *Greek Nation* was of a "fierce and warlike Character, their tragic "Representations rowled chiefly on Subjects of *Distress* and *Terror*."—On this Topic, I doubt whether ARISTOTLE hath not mistaken an *Effect* for a *Cause*. For he says, that "Tragedy, by Means of "Pity and Terror, purgeth in us *Those* and "other such like *Passions* [i]." MARCUS AURELIUS [k], MILTON [l], DACIER [m], and BRUMOY [n], all understand him, as meaning that Tragedy was formed *with this View*. It is not the Writer's Design to remark on this great Critic, farther than what relates to his main Subject. Therefore it will suffice to say, that if ARISTOTLE meant to assign this *moral End*, as the *Cause* why Tragedy assumed this Form in ancient GREECE, and adopted Subjects of *Distress* and *Terror*, He seems to have taken That for a *Cause*, which was a *natural Effect* of the ruling *Manners* of the *Greek Republics*. The Reasons which support the general Truth, already given in the correspondent Arti-

[i] *Poët.* c. 6. . [k] *L. xi. Art. 6.* [l] *Preface to SAMSON AGONISTES.* [m] *Poët. d'Arist.* [n] *Theat. des Grecs*, tom. i. p. 85.

cle; will hold their Force when applied here. For thus the *Greeks* animated each other to *Victory* and *Revenge*; by a Representation of what their Friends had *done* and *suffered*. These Subjects would likewise be most accommodated to the natural Taste of the poetic Chiefs of such a People; whose *Atchievements* produced and abounded with Events of *Distress* and *Terror*. Such then was the natural Origin and Adoption of these Subjects, in the *Greek Tragedy*: But after they were established on this Foundation, 'tis probable that the Statesmen encouraged and applied them to the *Ends* of Policy. For as the leading View of a fierce and warlike People must be to *destroy Pity* and *Fear*; so This would most effectually be done, by making themselves familiar with distressful and terrible Representations. Under these Restrictions the Opinion of ARISTOTLE may have a Foundation in Nature: Farther than this; and as applied to any People whose End is not *War* and *Conquest*, it carries the Appearance of a refined Idea, which hath no Foundation in Nature. The grand scenic Representations of the *Peruvians* and *Chinese* (as will

will appear below [o]) whose leading Object was *Peace*, are known to be of a quite contrary Nature, formed on their gentler Manners: and such as would have been altogether incompatible with the ferocious Character, and insipid to the Taste of the Tribes of ancient GREECE.

23. " Their Tragedy being designed as  
 " a visible Representation of their ancient  
 " Gods and Heroes, they invented a Method of strengthening the Voice, and  
 " aggrandizing the Visage and Person, as  
 " the Means of compleating the Resemblance." It is generally known, that the old *Grecian Gods* were supposed to be of a Stature *exceeding* that of *ordinary Men*: The true Reason of that Opinion was, because in the early Ages they (like every other barbarous People [p]) selected the *tallest* and *strongest* Men for their *Chiefs*: Which Chiefs in Course of Time became their *Gods*. Hence the *Buskin* and *Masque* had their natural Birth: For the first *brightened* the *Stature*, as the second *enlarged* the *Visage*, and *strengthened* the *Voice* of the dramatic Actor. And although the

[o] Sect. viii.

[p] See LAFITAU, and other Travellers.

common Accounts mention nothing of the *Inlargement* of the *Body* ; yet we learn from LUCIAN, that the *Breast*, *Back*, and all the *Limbs*, were *amplified* in Proportion to the *Visage* and *Stature* [q] : Manifestly as the Means of compleating the Resemblance of their Gods and Heroes.

By thus tracing the *Buskin* and *Masque* to their true Origin, we shall now be able to give a Reason for a Fact, which hath hitherto been regarded as merely the Effect of Whim and Caprice. THESPIS and his *Company* bedaubed their Faces with the *Lees* of *Wine*. Whence arose this Practice, seemingly so wild ? THESPIS and his *Company* were the Votaries of BACCHUS, and exhibited his Exploits, and sung his Praises to their Countrymen : Their Use of the *Lees* of *Wine*, therefore, was intended as the Means of compleating the *Resemblance* of their *drunken God* and his *Crew*.

24. “ As their *tragic Poets* were *Singers*, “ so they were *Actors*, and generally performed some capital Part, in their own “ Pieces for the Stage.” This Fact hath generally been held extraordinary and un-



accountable : And hath been resolved, it seems, by some Talkers on this Subject, into the *Want* of *Actors* in the *early* Periods. We now clearly discover a contrary Cause : The Practice took Place when the *highest* Characters were *proud* to signalize themselves as *Actors* : When Legislators and Bards assumed the *Lyrist's* and *Actor's* Character, as the Means of civilizing their surrounding Tribe : Therefore, till some extraordinary Change in Manners and Principles should ensue, the original Union established by Nature and Custom was of Course maintained in GREECE. SOPHOCLES was the first on Record who quitted this honourable Employ : And He, only because his Voice was unequal to the Vastness of the *Athenian* Stage. That he quitted it on this Principle alone, appears from his Conduct on other Occasions : For he not only *Sung* his *own* Verses, but likewise *led* the *Dance* at a public Triumph [r].

25. "MUSICAL *Contests*, consisting of "*Melody* and *poetic Song*, were admitted "*as public Exercises in the Grecian States.*"

[r] ATHEN. *Deign.* l. i.

For the Truth of This, we have the concurrent Evidence of many ancient Writers. That Union of *Gymnastic* and *musical* Exercises which took Place in the early Periods of the *Greek* Republics, hath by some Writers been regarded as *unnatural*: by all, as *accidental*. Thus a learned Author says, “ To these *Gymnastic* Exercises “ were added others of a quite *different* “ *Nature* [*s*].” But by following this Establishment up to it’s first Principles, we have now found, that in Fact the *Gymnastic* Exercises were originally a *Part* of the *musical* [*t*], being no more than the improved *Dance*, which was a Branch of ancient *Musick*. In Process of Time, as hath been proved, the *Dance* or *Gymnastic* Art was generally separated from the *Poem* and *Melody*: But it is remarkable, that in all their public Games or Contests, from the earliest to the latest Periods, these several Branches of Music, either separate or in Union, composed the essential Parts of their public Exhibitions.

The learned STRABO, PAUSANIAS, PROCLUS, and JULIUS POLLUX, have left us

[*s*] POTTER *Arch. Græc.* [*t*] See above, Art. xvii.

the most particular Account of the Rise and Progress of the Pythian Games ; which entirely coincides with the Principles here given [u]. From the ancient Celebration of these, down to the Time when they were established at DELPHI after the *Crissæan* War, we see, the musical Contest maintained it's original Savage Form, without any Separation of the Dance. " Afterwards the *Amphietyons*, under EURYLOCHUS, instituted the *equestrian* and *gymnastic* Contest ; appointing a Crown as the Conqueror's Reward [w]." Here, we find, in a later Period, the Establishment assumed it's political Form ; a Separation ensued ; the *Dance* was heightened into the *Gymnastic* Art, for the Reasons assigned above.

We have already seen the Form of this musical Contest, as described by STRABO and others [x]. We have observed, that they clearly deduce it's Origin from the Times of APOLLO himself [y]. SCALIGER, speaking of the Rise of these *Pythian* Games, makes no Doubt of their having been instituted by

[u] See above, Art. xvii. [w] STRABO, l. ix.

[x] Art. xvii. [y] Ibid.

APOLLO [z]. But not knowing the true Origin of the *Gymnastic* Art, as having originally made a Part of the *musical*, and supposing (according to the common System) that these Games were established as a mere *imitative Memorial* of the *particular Action* performed, he adds with great Candour, "I wonder, considering that he "killed the *Python* with an *Arrow*, that "he did not institute a *Contention* of *Archers*, rather than *Musicians* [a]." This Doubt, so candidly expressed, throws new Light upon the Question; and is a collateral Circumstance of Proof, that these Games had their Origin in the savage *Song-Feast*, which in aftertimes branched out into the *Gymnastic Arts*.

So much concerning the Rise and Progress of the *Pythian Games*; which sufficiently clears our Subject. As to the Origin and Progress of the *Olympic Games*, it is much hid in the Darkness of distant Ages. They are generally ascribed to the *Idean HERCULES*, who is said to have given them the Name of *Olympic*. But if we attend to Arguments of Pro-

[z] *Pœt.* l. i. c. 23.[a] *Ibid.*

bability, arising from the Analogy of Names, we shall rather be led to attribute their Institution to the *Olympian* JUPITER; especially, as Tradition supports this Conjecture at least as strongly as the other. For PAUSANIAS informs us, that "there are who say, that JUPITER contended for Empire with SATURN, in this very Place: Others affirm, that having vanquished the *Titans*, He (JUPITER) instituted these Games, in which others too are said to have been Conquerors; that APOLLO vanquished MERCURY in the *Race*, and overcame MARS at *boxing* [b]." All this agrees so entirely with the *Character* and *Contentions* of *savage Chieftains*, as to create a strong Probability of the Truth of the Tradition. This we know, however, that Musical Contests made an essential Part of these magnificent Exhibitions; and that PINDAR sung his Odes, and was often crowned as *Victor* in these public Contests.

The *Isthmian* and *Nemean* Games, having been instituted in later Periods, when a Separation of the Dance had been al-

[b] PAUSANIAS, l. v.

ready made, and consequently the *Gymnastic Arts* already established, we cannot properly draw any Conclusions from These, relative to the present Question.

The *tragic Contests*, which followed on the Improvement of that Species of Poetry, are too well known to need any particular Delineation. Let it suffice, that we have traced them up to their first rude Form and Origin in the *musical Contest* at DELPHI, as described by ancient Authors [c]. They were re-established in their more improved State by CIMON, when that General brought the Remains of THESEUS to ATHENS. The three great tragic Bards, ESCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, and EURIPIDES, all *contended*, and were *crowned* by Turns.

This general Establishment of *musical Contests*, which hath been so often held trifling and unaccountable, appears now to have been founded in true Policy and Wisdom. “For as the leading Articles  
“of their Religion, Morals, and Polity,  
“made a Part of their public Songs; so,  
“public Contests of this Kind were justly  
“regarded as the surest Means of keeping

[c] See above, Art. xvii.

“ up an Emulation of a most useful Nature; and of strengthening the State, by  
 “ enforcing the fundamental Principles of  
 “ Society, in the most agreeable, most  
 “ striking, and most effectual Manner.”

26. “ The Profession of *Bard* was held  
 “ as very *honourable*, and of high Esteem.”  
 We have seen the Foundation of This, in  
 the thirteenth Article of the present Section.  
 For he was vested with a Kind of public  
 Character; and if not an original Legislator,  
 was at least a subordinate and useful  
 Servant of the State: And as the Utility  
 of his Profession was such as arose from  
*Genius*, personal Respect and Honour was  
 the natural Consequence in a *well ordered*  
*Republic*. The Facts which support this  
 Truth, with regard to ancient GREECE,  
 are commonly known, from the *Crowns*,  
*Triumphs*, and other Marks of public and  
 appointed Regard, bestowed on the *Victors*  
 in the *musical Contests*.

27. “ ODES and *Hymns* made a Part of  
 “ their domestic Entertainment; and the  
 “ Chiefs were proud to signalize themselves,  
 “ by their Skill in *Melody* and *poetic Song*.”  
 —This is generally known; and needs no  
 particular Proof. It is introduced here,  
 that

that it may be accounted for: Because it hath been held a Practice unworthy the Character of *Legislators* and *Heroes*, to be ambitious of *singing* and *playing* on the Lyre. But if we examine the Nature of the ancient Songs of GREECE, we shall find that the Performance of them was worthy of the highest Characters. It was usual for all who were at their Entertainments, first to sing together the Praises of the Gods [*d*]: Then they sung successively, one by one, holding a Branch of *Myrtle* in their Hand, which was sent round the Table [*e*]. In later Times, when the *Lyre* came more into Use, *this* Instrument was sent round instead of the *Myrtle*; and in this Period it was, that their Songs assumed the Name of *Solia* [*f*].

The poetic Songs were chiefly of the three great Classes, *religious*, *political*, and *moral*. Of the first Class, ATHENÆUS hath preserved no less than five: One to PALLAS, one to CERES, one to APOLLO, one to PAN, and one to all the tutelary Gods of ATHENS [*g*].

[*d*] PLUT. *Symp.* l. i. q. i. ATHEN. *Deip.* l. xv.

[*e*] PLUT. *ib.* [*f*] PLUT. *ib.* ATHEN. *ib.*

[*g*] ATHEN. *ib.*



Of the second Class, the *political*, in which their *Heroes* were celebrated, though not advanced to the Rank of *Gods*, the same Author hath given us several; in which AJAX, TELAMON, HARMODIUS, the *Heroes* who fell at LEIPSYDRION, ADMETUS, the *Olympic* Victors, and others, were celebrated at their private Entertainments [b].

Of the third or *moral* Class ATHENÆUS hath likewise transmitted to us a Collection. Of this Kind we find one upon the *Vanity* and *Mischiefs* of *Riches*, one upon *Prudence*, one upon the comparative Excellence of the *Goods* of Life; one upon *Friendship*, one upon the *Choice* of *Friends*, one upon *false Friends*; and a fine one of ARISTOTLE on the *Force* of *Virtue*, which may be said in some Measure to comprehend all the three Kinds, *religious*, *political*, and *moral*.

Such being the Nature of the old *Grecian Songs*, and the whole Nation having been prepared to perform and listen to them with Reverence by a correspondent Education; no Wonder that the highest Characters in the Commonwealth bore a

[b] ATHEN. *Deip.* l. xv.

Part in their Performance at private Entertainments: “For their Songs being enriched with the great and important Subjects relative to their public State, and being the *established Vehicle of Religion, Morals, and Polity*; nothing could be more suitable to a high Station in the Commonwealth, than a Proficiency in this *sublime and legislative Art*.”

28. “When *Musick* (that is *Melody* and *Poem*, thus united) had attained to this State of relative *Perfection*, it was esteemed a *necessary Accomplishment*: And an Ignorance in this Art was regarded as a capital Defect.” Of this we have an Instance, even in THEMISTOCLES himself, who was upbraided with his Ignorance in *Musick* [*i*]. The whole Country of *Cynæthæ* laboured under a parallel Reproach [*k*]: And all the enormous *Crimes* committed there, were attributed by the neighbouring States to the *Neglect* of *Musick*. — What Wonder? For according to the Delineation here given of the ancient *Greek Musick*, their Ignorance in this noble Art implied a general Deficiency in the three great Articles,

[*i*] CICERO *Tusc.* l. i. [*k*] ATHENÆUS, POLYBIUS.

of a SOCIAL EDUCATION, *Religion, Morals, and Polity.*

29. "The Genius of their *Poem* and *Melody* varied along with their Manners." Of this Truth we have had abundant Proofs, in the Course of this Dissertation; where we have seen them emerge from the Rudeness of barbarous Life, and improve through the successive Periods of improving Manners. We shall soon see a parallel Decline of these noble Arts, arising from an equivalent Cause: For Manners being the "leading and most essential Quality of Man, All his other Tastes and Acquirements naturally correspond with These; and accommodate themselves to his Manners, as to their original Cause."

30. "As every Change of Manners influenced their *Poem* and *Melody*, so by a reciprocal Action, every considerable Change in These influenced their Manners." The Facts which prove this, will be given in the thirty-second Article. In the mean Time, the Reason is evident: For not only the Passion for *Novelty* and *Change* was immediately dangerous to the *Stability* of *small Republics*; but still farther, as *poetic Song* was the established *Vehicle* of all  
the

the great Principles of *Education*, a Change in *That* inevitably brought on a Change in *These*.

31. "There was a provident Community, of Principles uncommonly severe, which fixed the *Subjects* and *Movements* of *poetic Song* and *Dance*, by *Law*." This provident Community was that of SPARTA. The Practice was not peculiar to this wise though barbarous Commonwealth. It was borrowed from CRETE; and came originally from EGYPT; where the same provident Institution had taken Place in earlier Ages.—In that great Fountain of ancient Polity, not only the Art of *Musick* in it's enlarged Sense, but even that of *Painting*, was fixed and made unalterable by Law [1]. PLATO, who informs us of This, gives a particular Detail of the musical Establishment, which sets the Principle in a clear Light, and corroborates what is here advanced. "All their Songs and Dances are consecrated to the Gods: It is ordained, what Sacrifices shall be offered to each Deity, and what *Hymns* and *Choirs* shall be appointed to each Sacrifice: But if any Person makes Use of

[1] PLATO *de Legibus*, l. ii.

"*Hymns*

“ *Hymns* or *Choirs* in the Worship of the Gods,  
 “ other than what is appointed by *Law*,  
 “ the Priests and Magistrates expel him the  
 “ Community [m]. “ Hence (saith PLATO  
 in another Place) “ their *Music* (that is,  
 “ their *Poem* and *Melody*) is found to have  
 “ continued *uncorrupted*, and the *same*, for  
 “ thousands of Years [n].” A Stroke of  
 Polity, fatal indeed to *Art*, but excellent  
 with Respect to the Stability and Duration  
 of a State. This uncommon Effort of  
*Egyptian* Legislation the *Spartan* Lawgiver  
 adopted from CRETE; and by this severe  
 Establishment is said “ three Times to have  
 “ saved the State.” Innovations were at-  
 tempted by three different Musicians, TER-  
 PANDER, TIMOTHEUS, and PHRYNNIS  
 [o]: And as the very Sentence of the *Spar-*  
*tan* Senate against one of these Incroachers  
 on the severe Simplicity of the Common-  
 wealth is yet preserved; it may not be  
 disagreeable to the Reader, to present  
 him with this curious Remnant of Anti-  
 quity. “ Whereas TIMOTHEUS the *Mi-*  
 “ *lesian*, coming into our City, and de-  
 “ spising the ancient Music; rejecting also

[m] *De Leg.* l. vii. [n] *Ibid.* l. ii. [o] *ATHEN.*  
*Deip.* l. xiv.

“ that

“ that Melody which ariseth from seven  
 “ Strings ; and setting off his Music by  
 “ a Multiplicity of Strings, and a new  
 “ Species of Melody, corrupts the Ears  
 “ of our Youth ; and instead of That  
 “ which is legitimate and pure, corrupt-  
 “ ing the *Enharmonic* by new, various,  
 “ and *Chromatic* Sounds ; and being  
 “ called to the *Eleusinian* Mysteries, did  
 “ divulge the Secrets of that Institution ;  
 “ —It seemed good to the *Senate* and  
 “ *Rhetors*, that TIMOTHEUS should be  
 “ called to Account for these Proceed-  
 “ ings ; that he should be compelled to  
 “ cut off the four superfluous Strings  
 “ from his Lyre, leaving the seven an-  
 “ cient Tones ; and that he be banished  
 “ to a Distance from the City ; that  
 “ hence forward none may dare to in-  
 “ troduce any new and dangerous Custom  
 “ in SPARTA ; lest the Honour of our  
 “ musical Contests should be defiled [*p*].”

[*p*] ARATI PHÆNOMENA, *Ed. Oxon.* at the End of  
 which this Edict is preserved.—The Charge against TI-  
 MOTHEUS, of divulging the Secrets of the *Eleusinian My-*  
*steries*, appears, at first Sight, to be oddly introduced *here* :  
 It seems probable, that he had made these *Mysteries* the  
*Subject* of his *Songs* : This is the only Explanation that can  
 give a thorough Propriety and Consistence to that Part of  
 the Decree.

In

In this Edict, we see the jealous Spirit of a Republic, which could only subsist by a rigorous Simplicity of Manners, and an unalterable Obedience to it's Laws. There hath been much ill-founded Ridicule thrown on the *Spartans* for this Decision: For if we consider the dangerous Effects of mere *Innovation* in *small Republics*, and the close Connection between the *Melody* and the *Subject* in ancient *Music*, together with the early and continued Application of *These* to the *Education* of their Youth, we shall find, that in this Instance the *Spartans* only acted a cautious and consistent Part. Their Principle was, to admit *no Change* in *Manners*, and therefore *no Change* in *Music*. The designed *Innovation* of TIMOTHEUS, therefore, would have destroyed the first leading Principle, the very Genius of their Republic; and, consequently, must have been fatal to the Republic itself.

32. " In the Commonwealths which  
 " were of more libertine and relaxed Prin-  
 " ciples, and particularly in that of A-  
 " THENS, the Corruption of Manners  
 " brought on the *Corruption* of their *Poem*  
 " and *Melody*; and this *Corruption* of *Poem*  
 " and

“ and *Melody* still farther corrupted *Manners*; the Bards, Poets, or Musicians, being the immediate Instruments of the “Corruption.” This mutual Influence of Manners and Music on each other hath been already explained in two preceding Articles [q]. And the Truth of these Reasonings is confirmed by Facts, which *PLATO* gives us at large, in the following most remarkable Passage.

“ The People (of *ATHENS*) did not in former Times controul the Laws, but willingly obeyed them. I mean those Laws which were made concerning Music. For Music was then precisely distinguished into its several Kinds: One was appropriated to the Supplication and Praises of the Gods: These were called *Hymns*. Another Species was the lamenting or pathetic: A third was the *Pæan* or Song of Triumph: A fourth was the *Dithyrambic*; and a fifth consisted in singing ancient *Laws* or *Proverbs* [r]. In These and other Subjects established by Law, it was not allowed to use one Kind of Melody instead of

[q] Art. 29, 30. [r] See Art. 6.

“ another:



“ another : Each Kind had it's particular  
 “ Appropriation. The Power of deciding  
 “ on These, and of condemning in Case of  
 “ Disobedience, was not committed to the  
 “ Hisses and foolish Clamours of the Mul-  
 “ titude, as is now the Practice: Neither  
 “ was the Liberty of intemperate Praise  
 “ allowed to a noisy Croud: This Deci-  
 “ sion was left to Men distinguished by  
 “ their Sense and Knowledge; and a ge-  
 “ neral Silence was maintained, till they  
 “ had heard the Conclusion of the Work.  
 “ The young Men, their Governors, and  
 “ all the People, were obedient to the  
 “ Motions of a Wand. While this good  
 “ Order was maintained, the Multitude  
 “ willingly obeyed, nor dared to decide  
 “ any thing in a tumultuous Manner.  
 “ But in Course of Time the Poets them-  
 “ selves were accessary to a fatal Change  
 “ in Music: They wanted not Genius;  
 “ but had no Regard to what was just  
 “ and legitimate; running into Extrava-  
 “ gance, and too much indulging the  
 “ Vein of Pleasure. Hence they con-  
 “ founded all the several Kinds together;  
 “ affirming that *mere Taste and Pleasure*,  
 “ whether it were that of a *good* or a  
 L “ *wicked*

“ *wicked* Man, was the only *Criterion* of  
 “ *Music*. In Consequence of this, they  
 “ composed their *Poems* on the same  
 “ Principle; and thus rendered the *Mul-*  
 “ *titude* so *bold* and *daring* against the *es-*  
 “ *tablished Music*, that they assumed to  
 “ themselves the sole Right of deciding  
 “ on it. Hence the Theatres began to  
 “ be in Uproar, where formerly Silence  
 “ had reigned: And thus the Privilege  
 “ of *judging* fell from the *Rulers* of the  
 “ State to the *Dregs* of the People. Had  
 “ this Authority been assumed by the  
 “ *liberal* Part of the City, no great Harm  
 “ had followed: But now, from this *cor-*  
 “ *rupt Change* in *Music*, a general *Licen-*  
 “ *tiousness* of *Opinion* hath ensued.—The  
 “ Consequence of this hath been, that  
 “ we no longer are disposed to obey the  
 “ Magistrate: Hence too, that other Evil  
 “ flows, that we despise the Authority  
 “ and Precepts of our Parents, and the  
 “ Advice and Wisdom of Old Age.  
 “ And as we are rising towards the Ex-  
 “ treme of this Corruption, we now re-  
 “ fuse Obedience to the Laws: And to  
 “ fill up the Measure of our Iniquities,  
 “ all

“ all *Religion* and mutual *Faith* are lost  
“ among us [*s*].

Such is the Picture which the philosophic PLATO hath left of his Time and Country, a Picture too well confirmed by the concurrent Testimony of XENOPHON [*t*]; in whose Accounts, together with those of PLUTARCH [*u*], we shall soon see a particular Delineation of the Progress of this Evil, which PLATO here describes in general Terms. [*w*].

L 2

23. “ In

[*s*] *De Legibus*, l. iii.

[*t*] See below, Sect vii. Art. 5. [*u*] See ib.

[*w*] Let us conclude this Article with the Explanation of a Subject, which hath not hitherto been clearly treated of, for want of a just Idea of the ancient *Greek Music*. The learned VOSSIUS thus expresseth himself:  
“ It is a doubtful Point, whether we should say, that  
“ on a Change of Music, a Change of Manners ensues;  
“ or that a Change in Manners produceth a Change in  
“ Music: The first was DAMON’s Opinion which PLATO  
“ follows: But CICERO leans to the latter System [*x*].”  
On this Passage it is necessary first to observe, that both VOSSIUS and CICERO use the Word *Music* in its modern Acceptation, as implying mere *Melody*. No Wonder, therefore, if they had but an imperfect Comprehension of PLATO’s Argument. Secondly, On the Principles delivered in this Dissertation, it will appear, that PLATO was of both these Opinions, “ That Manners  
“ influenced Music, and Music influenced Manners.”

[*x*] VOSSIUS.

33. “ In Consequence of these Progressions, a gradual and total *Separation* of “ the *Bard’s complex Character* ensued. The “ *Leader of the State* no longer was ambitious of the poetic and musical Art; “ nor the *Poet* descended to the Profession “ of *Lyrist, Singer, or Actor* : Because these “ Professions, which in the earliest Ages “ had been the Means of inculcating every “ thing *laudable and great*, grew by De-

In the Passage which VOSSIUS refers to, where the Opinion of DAMON is delivered, PLATO speaks of a Change in Music, as influencing the Manners of a Commonwealth : This Change he regards, as opening a Door for Confusion and Novelty in an Affair of public Consequence ; similar to a Neglect of Reverence to old Men, Parents, or Magistrates, or any other ancient and approved Customs that were connected with the public Welfare : And in this Respect, the *Influence of the Greek Music*, as now explained, on the Manners of Mankind is too evident to need any farther Proof.

On the other Hand, it is no less evident, that PLATO was of Opinion, that a Corruption of Manners must corrupt Music. He hath shewn us in the Passage given above, that the Boldness and Degeneracy of the People of ATHENS first allured the Poets to debase their Art, by singing such Poems as were accommodated to their vicious Taste founded on their vicious Manners : That as Manners had thus debased Music, so this corrupt Music by a natural Reaction still farther corrupted Manners, and completed the Destruction of Religion and Virtue.

“ greeks

“grees of less and less Importance ; and  
 “being at length perverted to the *con-*  
*trary Purposes*, were in the End *disdained*  
 “by the wise and virtuous.” These gra-  
 dual Separations of the several Branches  
 of the Bard’s complex Office, and of Me-  
 lody, Dance, and Song, are not incurious  
 in their Progression.—We have seen, that  
 in the *earliest* Ages, the *Gods* or *Legisla-*  
*tors* themselves often assumed the full and  
 complex Character ; that they were *Poets*,  
*Lyrist*s, *Singers*, and *Dancers*. The *Dance*  
 seems first to have been separated from  
 the *Melody* and *Song*, being soon heigh-  
 tened into the *Gymnastic* Art. The *Le-*  
*gislators* by Degrees quitted the several  
 Parts of the *Bard’s* Character ; a Sepa-  
 ration which naturally arose from de-  
 creasing Enthusiasm, and increasing Cares  
 of Government. As LINUS and ORPHEUS  
 were the first, so PYTHAGORAS and SOLON  
 seem to have been the last, who *composed*  
 Songs and *sung* them to the surrounding  
 People.—The Profession of *Bard* was now  
 become a *secondary* but *respectable* Charac-  
 ter, as being an Assistant to the Magis-  
 trate, and an useful Servant of the  
 State, a Teacher of Religion and Morals.

The Bard *sung* and *played*, and led the *Dance* occasionally : But when HOMER's Poems had eclipsed every other Epic Strain, another Separation followed : The *Rhapsodists* arose in GREECE : They sung HOMER's Poems to large surrounding Audiences : They were strictly his *Representatives*, who now gave his Poems to the People, with that poetic Fire and Rapture which the Bard himself had possessed and exerted : For in PLATO's *Ion*, the *Rhapsodist* says, that " when he sings a piteous Tale, his Eyes " swim in Tears ; when he sings a terrible Event, his Heart beats, and his " Hair stands erect." In the earlier Ages of Tragedy, the Poet both acted and sung : But in the Time of SOPHOCLES, another Separation, parallel to the last, ensued ; and the Province of *Actor* began to be distinct from that of *Poet*.—Soon after this Time we find in the Passage quoted above from PLATO, that a Separation of the *whole* Art of *Music* from its *proper Ends* took Place at ATHENS : Its salutary Effects were now lost : and as at this Period the Passion for illiberal *Comedy* (the Species of *corrupt Poetry*

try

try which PLATO hints at) came on, so we learn from the concurrent Testimony of PLUTARCH [y] and other Authors [z], that the Exhibition of the Dramatic Shews at ATHENS had now degenerated into mere external *Pomp*, equally expensive and pernicious. The same respectable Ancient assures us, that the *Dance*, which had formerly been separated from the *Song* for warlike Purposes, was now corrupted by the *Mimes* in a very extraordinary Degree [a]. The Consequence of these Corruptions soon shewed themselves in a subsequent Period: Hence in the Age of PLATO, another Separation had come on: For now the complex Name of *αοιδος* or *Bard* was disused and that of *ποιητης* or *Poet* had assumed it's Place: And as the *Legislator's* Office had formerly been separated from the *Bard's*; so now, in Consequence of this Corruption, and as a natural Effect of Music's sinking into a mere *Amusement*, the *Poet's* Character became quite distinct from that of *Chorist*, *Actor*, or *Dancer*, and these distinct from each other [b].

[y] *Sympos.* l. vii. [z] JUSTIN, l. vi. [a] *Sympos.* l. ix. q. 15. [b] PLATO *de Repub.* l. ii.

For the *moral* End being now *forgot*, and nothing but *Amusement* attended to, a higher Proficiency in these Arts became necessary, and consequently a more severe Application to each.—We must now go back a little, to catch the Rise of another Separation: An *Inroad* was made into the *Muse's Territories*: The public musical Contentions admitted *Prose*, as an Aspirant to the Palm originally due to *Poetry* and *Song*. HERODOTUS was the first who was crowned for *writing* and *speaking* (or more properly for *singing*) *History* at the public Contest [*c*]. And it is remarkable, that although He brought down the *poetic Song* to the *prosaic* Manner, yet still his Work retained the *fabulous Air*, as well as the *Appellation* of the *Muses*: All which Circumstances, considered in Union, may lead us to the true *poetic* and *fabling* Genius of his celebrated History. THUCIDIDES hints at this Practice in the Beginning of his noble Work [*d*]: Declaring, that he means it not as a mere Exercise for the *public Contest*; but as a valuable Possession for *After-Ages*. In

[*c*] LUCIAN, HERODOTUS. [*d*] L. i. c. 6.



later Times it became a common Practice for *Sophists* and *Rhetoricians* to contend in *Prose*, at the *Olympic Games*, for the Crown of Glory [e].—The *Delphic Oracles* kept Pace with these progressive Separations: In the early Periods they were delivered by the *Pythia*, with frantic *Gesture*, *Melody*, and *Rythm* [f]. In a succeeding Age, we find the *Pythia* hath quitted her complex Character; *Poets* are appointed for the Service of the Temple, and turn the *Oracles* into *Versè*: But in the later Times, this Practice had also ceased; and the *Oracles* were given in plain *Prose* [g].—In the Days of ARISTOTLE, a general and almost a total Separation had taken Place. The Art of playing on the *Lyre*, which had been the *Glory* of their early *Legislators*, was now regarded as a *Reproach* to a young *King*: The Art of *singing*, which had once been a distinguished Attribute of their *Gods*, was now reckoned an ignoble Practice for a *Man* [h]: The *Choir* of some of their *Dramas* gave

[e] LUCIAN *de Salt.* [f] Above, Art. viii.

[g] STRABO, l. ix. CICERO *de Div.* l. ii.

[h] ARISTOT. *Polit.* l. viii. c. 5.

Way to *Melody* merely *instrumental*, which now first assumed the Name of *Musick*: The *Rhapsodists* had, about this Time, begun to quit a Part of *Their* Profession; and instead of *singing*, often *recited* HOMER'S Poems [i]. To conclude all, the wise and learned PLUTARCH in a later Period, viewing the poetic and musical Entertainments in that corrupt State which they held in his own Time, though he still asserts the Use of Music and Poetry in private Education, gives up the public Exhibitions, as chiefly fit to gratify the Taste of an abandoned People [k].

## S E C T. VI.

*Of the Origin and Progression of Comedy  
in ancient GREECE.*

THUS we have attempted to unfold the natural Origin and Progress of Poetry in ancient GREECE, through it's several Forms of *Ode*, *Epic*, and *Tragedy*; and to trace the Gradations of their poetic and musical Arts, from the Periods of their Rise and Power, to those of their Corruption and Decay.

[i] ARISTOT. *Poet.* c. 26.[k] *Plut. Sympos.* l. vii. qu. 9.—l. ix. qu. 15.

But

But there is one considerable Branch of the Poetry of ancient GREECE, I mean COMEDY, the Rise and Progression of which, together with their Causes, have been designedly passed in Silence: Because, if this Disquisition had been mixed with what hath been delivered concerning the *Ode*, *Epic*, and *Tragedy*, the Chain of Argument would have been broken; and that Order and Clearness destroyed, which it was necessary to preserve as much as possible in this involved Subject.—Not only so; but the Birth and Progress of Comedy itself (as will appear below) was owing to those Corruptions which we have here unfolded: The History of this Species, therefore, naturally came last, in the Order of Things.

Let us now proceed, therefore, to reduce the Origin and Progress of the *Greek Comedy* to their natural and essential Causes.—To point out the Rise of this Poem from savage Life; to unfold the true Reasons why it was so late in taking its legitimate Form in GREECE; and then to explain, on what Foundation the *old*, *middle*, and *new Comedy*, appeared in their respective *Successions*.

In

In the Description of the Savage Song-Fests, given above from LAFITAU, it appears that these warlike Tribes “are still quicker at rallying, than at praising, each other. He who dances, takes whomsoever he pleaseth by the Hand; and brings him forth into the midst of the Assembly; to which he yields without Resistance. Mean while the Dancer continued to *sing*, and sometimes in his Song, and sometimes in the Intervals, he throws his Sarcasms on the Patient, who hears him without Reply.—At every *bon Mot*, loud Peals of Laughter arise along the Galleries, who animate this Sport, and often oblige the Patient to cover his Head in his Mantle [1].”

Now, if we again suppose, as we have already done, that the Use of *Letters* should come among these savage Tribes, and be cultivated with that Spirit which is natural to a free and active People; from this Picture, as given by LAFITAU, the following Consequences would naturally arise.

1. “Their casual Strokes of Raillery would improve into written Invectives,

[1] See above, Sect. ii.

“which

“ which would occasionally be sung by  
 “ their sarcastic Choirs.” Because nothing  
 could be more alluring to a People of  
 this satyric Turn, than such a Repository  
 of Wit and Raillery ; which, like a Qui-  
 ver stored with the keenest Arrows, would  
 be ever at Hand, ready to be discharged  
 against the occasional Objects of their  
 Resentment.

2. “ Narrative or Epic Poems of the  
 “ *invective* or *comic* Kind would likewise  
 “ arise, and be occasionally sung at their  
 “ public Festivals.” For the Spirit of Sar-  
 casm being once awakened, it would of  
 Course proceed from occasional Strokes of  
 Raillery, to the Recital of ridiculous Ac-  
 tions, for the Gratification and Entertain-  
 ment of a lively and satyric People.

3. “ From these two Species (the *choral*  
 “ and *narrative* united) the first rude  
 “ Outline of *Comedy* would arise.” We  
 have seen how *Tragedy* arose from parallel  
 Causes : And These would naturally take  
 Place in producing *Comedy*. For the *Nar-*  
*rative*, already animated by Action, would  
 easily slide into dramatic Representation,  
 as in the Rise of *Tragedy* ; and the cor-  
 respondent *Peaks of Laughter* (by the As-  
 sistance

stance of written Invectives) would assume the Form of a *comic Choir*.

4. "While the salutary Principles of Legislation should prevail, Comedy thus formed, would be little encouraged by the Leaders of the State." For the grander Kinds of Poetry, already treated of, containing the Principles of Religion, Polity, and Morals, would draw their main Attention; while their Comedy, being no more than the Vehicle of Ridicule and vague Invective, would (at most) be only *endured* by prudent Legislators.

5. "A provident Community, of Principles uncommonly severe, might even banish this Species of Poem, as destructive to their State." Because nothing could be more dangerous to a Commonwealth established on Severity of Manners, than the unbounded Licentiousness of Sentiment and Speech, which this Comedy must tend to produce.

6. "If in a State of more relaxed Principles, where such Comedy had been tolerated, a general Corruption of Manners should take Place among the People; and if by any means, such a corrupt People should over-power the Magistrates,

“strates, and assume to themselves the  
 “Reins of Government ; then, this Spe-  
 “cies of Comedy would rise into Credit,  
 “and be publicly established.” For the  
*upright Leaders* of the State being *de-*  
*posed*, and the *Creatures* of such a *corrupt*  
*People* being seated in their *Place*, that  
*Comedy* would now be *authorized* by Law,  
 which was most accommodated to the  
*Taste* and *Vices* of such a *corrupt People*.

7. “The Ridicule and Invective of their  
 “Comedy, thus established, would be  
 “pointed chiefly against those Magis-  
 “trates, or private Men, whose Qualities  
 “would be hateful to the debauched  
 “Populace.” For Corruption being now  
 established as it were by Law ; that is,  
 by the Voice of a degenerate People  
 which stood in the Place of Law ; the  
 Poets would find it necessary to gratify  
 the People’s Vices as the surest Road to  
 Success ; and the most certain Road to  
 this must be by the *Ridicule of Virtue*.

8. “If a *Tyranny* should suddenly erect  
 “itself on the Ruins of such a People,  
 “it would by it’s Authority *silence* this  
 “Species of *Comedy*.”—For every thing  
 hateful to the People being now the es-  
 tablished

these farcaſtic Choirs aroſe in many of the *Greek* States nearly at the ſame Time; that is, in or about the firſt Periods of Civilization and Letters. For we have ſeen, that ſuch a Period would naturally produce them: “Be cauſe nothing could be  
 “more alluring to a People of the ſatyric  
 “Turn, than ſuch a Repoſitory of Rail-  
 “lery and Sarcaſm.” However, we muſt not omit to obſerve, that their Traditions are much more accommodated to Nature and Probability on this Subject, than on the Riſe of the tragic Choir, which they ſeem generally to have attributed to the ſingle Practice of the drunken Votaries of *BACCHUS*.

2. “Narrative or Epic Poems of the in-  
 “vective or comic Kind aroſe, and were  
 “occasionally ſung at their public Feſti-  
 “vals.” For the Truth of this Fact we have the Teſtimony of *ARISTOTLE*, who tells us, “that although we know not the  
 “Names either of theſe Poems or their  
 “Authors; yet there is Reaſon to believe  
 “that many had been written before *HO-*  
 “*MER*; and that his *Margites* brought  
 “this Species to its Perfection in the ſame  
 “Manner as the *Iliad* and *Odyſſy* had  
 “com-



“completed the Form of the Epic Poem [n].” That HOMER, as well as other Bards of the early Periods, sung their comic Poems at the festal Solemnities, needs no farther Proof here.

3. “From these two Species (the *Choral* and *Narrative* united) the first rude Outline of Comedy arose.” The *Narrative*, already animated by a lively Action, did easily slide into *dramatic* Representation; and the correspondent Peals of *Laughter* excited among the surrounding Audience, by means of written Invectives, assumed the Form of the *comic Choir*. In this Point, we have again to contend with the general Body of Critics, from ARISTOTLE down to the present Times, who all concur in ascribing the Rise of the legitimate Form of Comedy to HOMER’s *Margites*; in the same Manner as they have ascribed the Rise of *Tragedy* to the *Iliad* and *Odyssy*. But notwithstanding this general Concurrence of Opinion, it seems evident that the Progression of Comedy was founded in the same Causes with that of Tragedy: That they both naturally arose in the Course of

tablished Subject of the comic Muse, the Tyrants, who had taken away the public Liberty, must expect to become the Subject of Comedy, if permitted to revel in its former Licentiousness.

9. "The Poets would probably find  
 "a Subterfuge, for the Gratification of  
 "the People; and continue to represent  
 "*real Characters under feigned Names.*"  
 For this would be the only Species of Comedy they could pursue with a Probability of Success: And this might be continued without much Danger, if they were cautious with Respect to the Persons of the Tyrants.

10. "If a great Conqueror should arise,  
 "and, by subduing a Variety of Nations,  
 "should open a Communication between such a State and others of more  
 "luxurious and refined Manners, this *second*  
 "Species of Comedy would naturally  
 "receive a *Polish*; and, instead of the  
 "indirect personal Invektive, would assume the more delicate Form of general Raillery, and become a Picture of  
 "human Life."—For one of the first Efforts of a growing Politeness is to avoid all Occasions of *Offence*; and this, without  
 Respect

Respect to any Consequences, either good or bad, which may affect the Public; but merely from a selfish Regard to the Opinion of *Elegance*, and the Pride of *Urbanity*.

In Support of these Deductions, let us now endeavour to *realize* them; by shewing, that such Consequences did arise in GREECE: And in the Course of this Argument, the Writer hopes he shall be able to disclose the true Causes of the Progression of the ancient Comedy, so different from that of the higher Kinds of Poetic Composition.

1. "In the earliest Periods of the Greek States, their Casual Strokes of Raillery were improved into written Invectives, and were occasionally sung by their satiric Choirs." These written Invectives were in Fact so early, that all the Greek Writers with one Voice confess themselves altogether ignorant of their Origin. Their first Appearance is ascribed by different Authors to different Nations [*m*]; and no Wonder if Evidence be wanting in Support of each Pretence, when it is propable, that

[*m*] See VOSSIUS *Inst. Poët.* l. ii. c. 23.

Things, from an Union of the *Narrations* and the *Choir*, without any Respect had to HOMER's Poems. The same Arguments that have proved the one, will confirm the other. We see the natural Seeds of Comedy and scenic Representation in savage Life, no less than those of Tragedy [*o*]: Nay, even in the earliest Periods of GREECE itself, we shall find the first rude Form of Comedy, arising from an Union of *dramatic Representation* and a *Choir*, long before HOMER existed. In the Account already cited from STRABO and others, of the *musical Contest* established at DELPHI, which in Time branched out into the equestrian and gymnastic Games, as we have found the first rude Form of *Tragedy*; so now we shall find likewise a faint Outline of the first rude Form of *Comedy*. For it appears, that APOLLO with his Choir, and his Worshippers, in after-times, not only represented his Victory, and sung a Pæan in Consequence of it (in which Union we see the first rude Form of Tragedy) but likewise, in the Way of Ridicule they represented the *Hisses* of the dying Serpent, and sung an *In-*

[*o*] See above, Sect. ii.

*vective* or *Sarcasm* on his Overthrow [*p*]. For so I understand the Word *καμῆος* and *καμῆζιν*, used by these ancient Writers on this Occasion; as implying only *Sarcastic Verses*, and not *Iambics* in the strict Sense; which are generally believed to have been first formed by ARCHILOCHUS, many Ages after the Fact here alluded to. And hence the true Reason appears, why the Greek Comedy was written in *Verse*; because it was originally *sung*.—Now, in this Union of *comic Representation* and a *satyrical Choir*, we see the genuine, though imperfect and *rude Form* of the *old Greek Comedy*.

4. “While the salutary Principles of Legislation prevailed, Comedy, thus formed, was little encouraged by the Leaders of the State.” The Authority of ARISTOTLE is clear and decisive on this Point. “Comedy remained obscure and unknown, because little Regard was had to it from the Beginning; the Magistrate being late in appointing it a Choir.” He assigns no Reason for this Conduct of the Magistrate: But a suffi-

[*p*] See the Authors cited above, Sect. v. Art. 17.

cient Reason appears to be given above.  
 “ For the grander Kinds of Poetry con-  
 “ taining the Principles of Religion, Po-  
 “ lity, and Morals, drew their main At-  
 “ tention; while their Comedy, being no  
 “ more than the Vehicle of Ridicule and  
 “ vague Invective, was only *endured* by  
 “ prudent Legislators.” The Truth of this  
 Article will receive Confirmation from the  
 two succeeding.

5. “ There was a provident Community,  
 “ of Principles uncommonly severe, which  
 “ even banished this Species of Poem, as  
 “ destructive to their State.” We have al-  
 ready seen the Providence and Caution of  
 the *Spartans* in regulating their *Music* for  
 the Security of their Republic [q]. We  
 shall now see the admirable Consistency of  
 their Conduct, with Respect to the very  
 Beginnings of *Comedy*, when it first dawned  
 among them in the Verses of ARCHILO-  
 CHUS. “ The *Spartans* ordered the Wri-  
 “ tings of ARCHILOCHUS to be banished  
 “ from their City, because they thought  
 “ the Perusal of them was dangerous to  
 “ the Purity of Manners. They did not  
 “ chuse that the Minds of their Children

[q] See above.

should

“ should be tainted with them, lest they  
 “ should more hurt their Morals, than  
 “ sharpen their Wit [r].”

6. “ In the Republic of ATHENS, which  
 “ was of more relaxed Principles, where  
 “ this Comedy had been tolerated, a gene-  
 “ ral Corruption of Manners took Place  
 “ among the People: The corrupt People  
 “ over-powered the Magistrates; assumed  
 “ to themselves the Reins of Government,  
 “ and on this Foundation the old Comedy  
 “ arose into Credit, had a Choir appointed  
 “ by the Magistrate, and was publicly es-  
 “ tablified.” This was the natural and  
 necessary Consequence of the Power of a  
 corrupt People. For the upright Magi-  
 strates being deposed, and the Creatures  
 of this corrupt People seated in their Place,  
*that* Comedy was now authorized by Law,  
 which was most accommodated to the Vices  
 and Taste of a dissolute Populace.

[r] VAL. MAX. l. vi. c. 3.—In After-times, when  
 the severe Manners and the Glory of this Republic sunk  
 together, we find its Conduct altogether correspondent  
 with these Principles. The *Mimes*, the most dissolute  
 Species of Comedy, were then admitted. See SUIDAS,  
 ATHENÆUS, and other Authors of the later Periods.

These Causes clearly account for the Establishment of the old Comedy, at that very Period when it took Place. But as other Causes, void of all Foundation, have been assigned for this, by various Authors; it will be necessary to prove the Truth of the Causes here alledged, from the Authority of the Greek Writers.

PLATO, in the Passage cited above [s], gives us the History of the Corruption of the People, and of Music; but in such general Terms, that, without some farther Evidence, it is impossible clearly to fix the Time when, or the Means by which, this Change was brought about, so fatal to the Republic of *Athens*. It happens fortunately, that PLUTARCH hath recorded the Event with such Particularity of Circumstance, as leaves no Room to doubt on this Subject. PERICLES was the Man, who for his own private Ends of Popularity, effected this ruinous Change: For  
 “ By giving the People the Plunder and  
 “ Possession of the Lands taken from the  
 “ Enemy, and by squandering the public  
 “ Monies (formerly reserved for the Uses  
 “ of War) in SHEWS and PLAYS for their

[s] See Sect. v. Art. 34.



“*Entertainment*, and by Grants of Lar-  
 “*geſſes* and Penſions, he changed them  
 “from a ſober, modeſt, and thrifty Peo-  
 “ple who maintained themſelves by their  
 “own Labour, into a riotous and de-  
 “bauched Multitude ; and thus roused  
 “them into Sedition againſt the Court  
 “of the *Areopagus* [t].” From this Paſ-  
 ſage it is evident, that PERICLES not  
 only debauched the *Athenian* People ; but  
 that the Exhibition of Plays and Shews  
 was one of the very Engines of Cor-  
 ruption [u].—The concurrent Teſtimony  
 of XENOPHON clears the whole Affair ;

[t] *In Pericle.*

[u] Thus CICERO ſpeaks of the old Greek Co-  
 medy.—“*Eſto : populares Homines, improbos, in Rem-*  
 “*publicam ſeditioſos, Cleonem, Cleophontem, Hyperbolum*  
 “*læſit :—Patiamur :—Sed PERICLEM, cum jam fuæ*  
 “*Civitati maxima Auctoritate plurimos annos Domi et*  
 “*Bello præſuiſſet, violari Verſibus, et eos agi in Scena,*  
 “*non plus decuit, quam ſi Plautus noſter voluiſſet, aut*  
 “*Nævius, P. et Cn. Scipioni, aut Cæcilius M. Catoſi*  
 “*maledicere.*” Ex Frag. Cic. de Rep. l. iv.—Where,  
 we may obſerve, the Judgment of CICERO is falſe con-  
 cerning PERICLES : As it appears, that he was the firſt  
 Corrupter of the People : And it ſeems to have been a  
 juſt Punishment, that he was laſhed by that illiberal Co-  
 medy, which His own Influence firſt let in upon the  
 State.

and

and gives us a full View of the Consequences of this general Corruption, so far as the *old Comedy* is concerned. For in his Discourse on the *Athenian Republic*, he informs us, 1<sup>st</sup>, That, at the Period we have now fixed, “The Body of  
 “the People expelled All Good Men from  
 “the Magistracy, and advanced wicked  
 “Men in their Places.” 2<sup>dly</sup>, That “they  
 “gave the Practice and Profit of the *musical Exercises* to the Dregs of the People.” 3<sup>dly</sup>, That “in their Comedies  
 “they suffered none to be ridiculed, but  
 “those of higher Station and Worth;  
 “unless one of their own Rank happened  
 “to distinguish himself from the Multitude;  
 “and then he became the Object  
 “of theatrical Derision [*w*].”

These Evidences are so clear and precise, as to leave no Foundation of a Doubt on this Subject.

LORD SHAFTESBURY hath greatly mistaken this Matter in his *Advice to an Author* [*x*]; and is as careless or defective here in the Circumstance of Erudition, as at other Times in that of Reasoning. He

[*w*] XENOPHON *de Rep. ATHEN.*

[*x*] *Characteristics*, vol. i.

seems in one Passage to attribute the late Cultivation and Establishment of the old Comedy to it's being of more *difficult* Composition than Tragedy: "In this Part (Tragedy) the Poets succeeded sooner than in Comedy, or the facetious Kind; as it was natural indeed to suppose, since this was in reality the easiest (easier) Manner of the two." This is deciding a doubtful Point by a mere Affirmation: For the comparative Difficulty of these two Kinds hath been treated at large by a learned and most judicious Writer, who after a candid and profound Discussion of the Question, thinks it best to leave it undecided [y]. The noble Writer, next, seems to

[y] BRUMOY *Theatre des Grecs*, tom. vi.—This Question hath indeed been said, by a learned Writer, to admit of a *decisive Answer*, on this Principle; that "Tragedy, whose End is the *Pathos*, produces it by *Action*, while Comedy produces it's End, the *Humorous*, by *Character*. Now it is much more difficult to *paint Manners*, than to *plan Action*; because That requires the *Philosopher's Knowledge* of human Nature; this, only the *Historian's Knowledge* of human Events."—But in the Course of this Argument, it seems entirely forgot, that the tragic Poet's Province is not only to *plan*, but to *paint* too. Had he no farther Task, than what depends on the mere

*Historian's*

to attribute the late Cultivation of Comedy to “the Spirit of literary Criticism, which in the Nature of Things “could not arise, till it had Materials “to work on; and This he supposeth to “have been the *false Sublime* of their “*Tragedies*, which were often *parodied* in “the *old Comedy*.—But neither can this Cause be sufficient to account for the Effect; because it appears that the best Men, as well as the best *Tragedies*, were *parodied* or *ridiculed* more commonly

*Historian's Knowledge of human Events*, the Reasoning would hold. But as it is the first and most essential Effort of his Genius, in the Construction of a *complete Tragedy*, to *invent* and *order* a *pathetic Plan*, *consistent* in all it's Parts, and *rising* towards it's *Completion* by a *Succession* of Incidents which may *keep up* and continually *increase* *Terror* or *Pity*; it is manifest, that the *Perfection* of his *Plan* depends not on his mere *historic Knowledge of human Events*, but on his *philosophic Discernment of human Passions*; aided by a *warm and enlarged Invention*: Talents as rare, at least, as the *Knowledge or Discernment of human Characters*.—If to this we add the subsequent Task, of giving the *high Colourings of Passion* to the *tragic Plan* thus ordered, the *Difficulty* of writing a *complete Tragedy* may seem to be in some Respects *equal*, in others *superior* to that of producing a *complete Comedy*: For in the *Conduct* of this last Species, it is acknowledged, that a *small Degree* of *poetic Invention* will *support* it.

than

than the worst. Of this, the Fate of SOCRATES may stand as a convincing Proof. This Fact could not entirely escape the Notice of the noble Writer; for he acknowledges, that “even this *Remedy* itself was found to turn into “a *Disease* [z].” But we have already proved, that it was a Disease even on it’s first Appearance. In a Word, the Authorities given above, in Support of the true Causes of the Cultivation and Establishment of the old Greek Comedy at ATHENS, contain the clearest Proof that the noble Writer’s Deductions on this Subject are *specious*, but *not solid*; and that he discovers but little of what he seems to value so much, “a Comprehension of ancient Manners and ancient History.”—But what is odd enough, after having separately assigned these fictitious Causes, as being each the Foundation on which the old Comedy arose and was established, He at length glances accidentally upon the true one: Yet manifestly without any particular Knowledge of the Facts which support it. “According to this *Homeric* Lineage of

[z] P. 248.

“ Poetry, *Comedy* would naturally prove  
 “ the *Drama* of latest Birth. For though  
 “ ARISTOTLE cites HOMER’s *Margites* as  
 “ analogous to *Comedy*, yet the *Iliad* and  
 “ *Odyssey*, in which the heroic Style pre-  
 “ vails, having been ever highest in Es-  
 “ teem, were likest to be first wrought  
 and cultivated [a].” We may conclude,  
 then, upon the Authority of the three  
 great Ancients cited above, that “ the  
 “ Cultivation and Establishment of the  
 “ old Greek Comedy arose from the united  
 “ Corruption and Power of the Athenian  
 “ People.”

7. “ The Ridicule and Invektive of their  
 “ Comedy, thus established, was pointed  
 “ chiefly against those Magistrates or pri-  
 “ vate Men, whose Qualities were hate-  
 “ ful to the debauched Populace.” For  
 the Proof of this, the Reader is referred  
 to the Passages already cited from PLATO,  
 and XENOPHON: And on this Solution,  
 the Fate of SOCRATES is clearly ac-  
 counted for. Nor could any thing be  
 more natural, if the Causes here assigned  
 for the Establishment of the old Comedy

[a] *Characteristics*, vol. i. p. 253. Notes.

be true. “ For Corruption being now  
 “ established, as it were, by Law : that is,  
 “ by the Voice of a degenerate People,  
 “ which stood in the Place of Law ; the  
 “ Poets found it necessary to gratify the  
 “ People’s Vices as the surest Road to  
 “ Success ; and the only Road to this,  
 “ was now by the *Ridicule* of *Virtue*.

8. “ A Tyranny suddenly erected itself  
 “ on the Ruins of the corrupt *Athenian*  
 “ People, and at once silenced this Spe-  
 “ cies of Comedy.” This Event happen-  
 ed on the taking of ATHENS by LY-  
 SANDER ; and through the Authority of  
 the thirty Tyrants whom he established  
 there. These *Oppressors* did That from  
*Fear*, which *upright* Magistrates would  
 have done from *Virtue*. The plain Rea-  
 son hath been assigned above : “ Because  
 “ every thing hateful to the People being  
 “ now the established Subject of the co-  
 “ mic Muse, the Tyrants who had de-  
 “ stroyed the public Liberty, must expect  
 “ to become the Subject of Comedy, if  
 “ permitted to revel in it’s former Li-  
 “ centiousness.” Here again the noble  
 Author of the *Characteristics* seems to  
 assign a fictitious Cause for this Event,  
 drawn

drawn from his own Conjectures, instead of History. "Nothing could have been the Cause of this gradual Reform in the Commonwealth of Wit, beside the real Reform of Taste and Humour in the Commonwealth or Government itself."—For, saith he, "it *little concerned the Foreigners in Power* (the thirty Tyrants) after what Manner those *Citizens* treated *one another* in their *Comedies*; or what Sort of Wit or Humour they made Choice of, for their ordinary Divisions [b]." It can hardly be necessary to point out, in what Circumstance this Reasoning is defective. Had the private Citizens buffooned *each other only* in their *Comedies*, the *Thirty Tyrants* would indeed have had little to fear: But as it is evident, that the *public Magistrates*, and their *Conduct*, had been the standing Objects of theatrical Ridicule, it certainly *much concerned these Foreigners in Power*, to prevent that sarcastic Representation of their oppressive Government, which they must necessarily expect from the keen Spirit of an exasperated and licentious

[b] *Characteristics*, vol. i p 250. 249.



People. The noble Writer endeavours to confirm his Opinion by a parallel Instance drawn from the *Roman Commonwealth*; where a similar Prohibition took Place with regard to the *Atellane Fables*, at a Time, when no Effects of foreign "Power, or of a home Tyranny can be "pretended [c]." But this Instance joined to the Evidences already given on the Subject, instead of confirming, overturns his System: It only proves what was alledged above, that the *Athenian Tyrants* did that from *Fear*, which the *Roman Magistrates* did from *Virtue*.

9. "The Poets found a Subterfuge, for "the Gratification of the People; and "continued to represent real Characters "under feigned Names." Thus the *middle Comedy* was naturally established. For this was the only Species which they could now pursue with any Probability of *Success*: And this was continued without much *Danger*, as we find they were cautious, with Respect to the Persons of the Tyrants.—That such was the true Origin of this Change in the Character

[c] P. 251.

of the Greek Comedy, appears farther from the two following Considerations. First, there is not the least Reason to believe the Athenian People were at all changed from their coarse Manners and profligate Character, at the Time when the old Comedy was silenced: And secondly, by the Accounts left concerning the Genius of the *middle Comedy*, it appears, that it was in all Respects as illiberal and buffooning, in it's Beginnings, as the old Comedy had been; the single Circumstance of *nominal Designation* only excepted.

10. "A great *Conqueror* arose: And, by  
 "subduing a Variety of Nations, opened  
 "a *Communication* between the Common-  
 "wealth of ATHENS, and the *eastern*  
 "Kingdoms which were of more *luxurious*  
 "and *refined* Manners: On this Event,  
 "the *second* or *middle* Species of Comedy  
 "naturally received a *Polish*; and, lay-  
 "ing aside the indirect personal Invective,  
 "assumed the more delicate Form of ge-  
 "neral Raillery; and became a Picture  
 "of human Life." The learned Reader  
 will easily see, that ALEXANDER *the*  
*Great* is the Conqueror here alluded to:  
 in

in his Reign it was, and not till that late Period, that the *middle* Comedy was polished into the *new*. This was the natural Effect of that Politeness, which was introduced at ATHENS by a frequent and familiar Commerce with the effeminate Nations of the East. Till then, although the *Athenians* justly boasted a Superiority in the *Arts*, yet in their Converse and Treatment of each other, the concurrent Authority of ancient Historians, as well as the more certain Testimony of their own remaining Comedies assure us, that they were of an *illiberal* and *buffooning* Turn. But no sooner were the *Asiatic* Luxuries and Refinements brought to ATHENS; by the Conquests of ALEXANDER, than their coarse Manners melted gradually into false Politeness and Effeminacy. Now, “one of the first Effects of a growing Politeness, is to avoid all Occasions of Offence; and this, without Respect to any Consequences, either good or bad, which may affect the Public; but merely from a selfish Regard to the Opinion of *Elegance*, and the Pride of *Urbanity*.”

This Reasoning coincides in all Respects with the last Progression of Comedy at ATHENS: And those Writers, as Lord SHAFTESBURY and the Author of the Life of HOMER, who have attempted to resolve the Establishment of the new Comedy into a *Reform* or *Improvement* of Manners, in a *virtuous* Sense, have mistaken *Shadows* for *Realities*, and confounded *Decency* with *Virtue*. For it is certain, that both private and public Virtue were at the lowest Ebb, while Comedy was assuming it's *new* and finished Form. This we are assured of by the concurrent Testimony of PLUTARCH, JUSTIN, and other ancient Writers: Even so far were the *Athenians* from regarding the public Welfare or Defence of their Country, that it was made a capital Crime for any Man to propose the Re-establishment of their Militia, or the Application of the public Funds to it's Maintenance [d]. Their Vices therefore were not *lessening*, but *refining*: And the Idea of *Decency* was sliding in, to supplant the rougher Appearances of *Virtue*. We

[d] LIBANIUS *Arg. ad OLYNTH. I.*

know a neighbour Nation, in which parallel Effects prevail: a Nation who are too generally “licentious in private Morals, though in public Conduct decent:” And it is remarkable, that from this Refinement in Vices, a Species of Manners and of Comedy, there prevails, altogether similar to those of the later *Greeks*. For while their private Conversation abounds with *Irreligion*, *Immorality*, and *Obscenity*, nothing is admitted on their Stage, but what is consistent with *Piety*, *good Morals*, and *good Breeding*.

Such, then, was the Rise, Progress, and Completion, of *Comedy* in ancient GREECE. And so far must be allowed, that although the *Causes* of this gradual Reform do not challenge much Commendation; yet upon the whole, the *Effect* was *good*. For from these Causes arose the elegant and faultless MENANDER; whose Writings, in After-Times, became the Object of all polite Conversations, and the *Standard* of *good Breeding*, in the Days of PLUTARCH [e].

As to the *dramatic Satyr* and the *Mimes* of ancient GREECE, they do not properly

[e] *Sympos.* L. vii. qu. 8.

merit a particular Consideration in this Work. The *first* (if we may judge from the only remaining Model, the *Cyclops* of EURIPIDES) seems to have been no more than a drolling, grotesque, and *comic* Representation of their *sylvan Demi-Gods* and *Heroes*: The *second* no more than an irregular, obscene, and licentious *Farce*. Their *Rise*, therefore, is naturally included in That of *Comedy*: and as to their *Progressions* we know nothing of them.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of the Rise and Progress of the pastoral Species..*

IT will appear at large hereafter [*f*], that the Manners of Savages depend more on the *Barrenness* or *Fertility* of their *Soil*, than on the mere Influences of *Climate*, *Heat*, or *Cold*. The *Wants* that arise from a barren Soil, and the Methods of *Violence* necessary to relieve them, naturally produce the *ferocious* Character. The spontaneous Productions of a fertile Soil bring an *unsought* Relief to the Wants of it's In-

[*f*] In the Work advertised at the End of this Volume.

habitants: hence their Character is naturally *indolent* and *peaceful*.

From the *first* of these *Causes* we have found the natural Origin of the *grand* and *terrible* Kinds of Poetry, among the *mountainous* Districts and *warlike* Tribes of GREECE. From the *second*, we may naturally expect to find the Origin of the *mild* and *peaceful* Pastoral, in the fertile Vales of SICILY.

Here indeed it meets us. Not but that in other *fertile* Spots, the same Species may have arisen *sooner*: But SICILY is the first Scene of Pastoral, that History hath clearly delivered down to succeeding Times.

DAPHNIS is the most ancient Sicilian Bard of this Kind, that History hath recorded. DIODORUS hath given us a fine Description of his rural Dwelling; which appears to have been one of the most fertile, and beautiful Spots in SICILY [g]. His Condition was suitable: for his Wealth consisted in Herds of Cattle [h]. The Historian placeth him in a very ancient Period; as far back as the Age of MERCURY [i]. 'Tis therefore pro-

[g] L. iv. [h] ib.

bable, that he gave but the first rude Sketch of the pastoral Song. After Him, a Succession of pastoral Bards arose in SICILY; whose Poems (as well as those of their Master DAPHNIS) have perished in the Wreck of Time. At last, THEOCRITUS appeared; in whose Pastorals this Species appears in it's legitimate and finished Form.

As the Poems of THEOCRITUS are the chief remaining Models of the Kind, they are the surest Foundation of our Reasonings on the Subject: And the Circumstances which they lead us to, concerning the Rise and Progress of this Species, are these which follow.

1. They contain internal Proofs, that the Pastoral was the natural Produce of the Fertility of the Island. The principal Persons introduced, are all of them the Chieftains of the pastoral Tribes: They are either rich in *Cattle, Sheep, or Goats*. The *Place* and *Time* of their Songs are *identified* and *fixed*: The Manners described are simple and natural: The Dialect is suited to them: their ancient Bard, the famed DAPHNIS, is often alluded to:



his Amours and Death are fung: In a Word, every Circumstance seems united, that can tend to prove them the artless Effusions of a pastoral Enthusiasm, describing what it saw and heard.

2. The *natural Union* of *Poem* and *Melody* is here exhibited in its native and simple State. The *poetic Song* is always accompanied with the *pastoral Pipe*. And it is evident from a Variety of Passages, that *the same Person* both *sung* and *played* at the same Time.

3. As these Pastorals are of two distinct Forms, the one a *Monody* and the other a *Dialogue*; the Rules of Analogy lead us to believe, that the *pastoral Monody* was first composed and fung, because it is the *simpler Form*. It generally contains an artless Mixture of *Narration* and *Complaint*, the natural Effusions of Love and Grief.

4. The same Rules of Analogy lead us to believe, that this *Monody* was naturally improved by Time, into the *pastoral Dialogue*. The *dramatic Form* was of Course introduced here, as it found it's Way into the grander Kinds of Poetry in GREECE.—I wonder, that none of the Critics have attempted to prove the *pastoral Dialogue*,  
as

as well as the *tragic Dialogue*, to have been a mere Imitation of HOMER. The *Odyssey* might have been as rich a Fund for the *one*, as the *Iliad* for the *other*.—'Tis presumed, it now sufficiently appears, that the Poems of ESCHYLUS and THEOCRITUS, no less than those of HOMER himself, were all of them *fair* and *blameless* THEFTS FROM NATURE.

## S E C T. VIII.

*Of the Rise and Progress of the lesser Kinds of Poetry in ancient GREECE.*

UNDER this Title of the *lesser Kinds* of Poetry, I include the *Elegy*, *Satire*, and *Didactic*.

The *Elegy*, strictly speaking, is no other than a Species of the *Ode*: It is properly an *Ode* of *Lamentation*. The only Circumstance, which in Process of Time distinguished and identified This into a particular Species, seems to have been a peculiar Form of *Verseification*. There are few remaining Models of This, among the Greek Poets. EURIPIDES hath left us *one* [k]. But this is a Progression of such a trifling Nature, as deserves no farther Notice.

[k] *Andromach.*

*Satire,*

*Satire*, in it's primary State, was likewise a Species of the *Ode*. As the *Elegy* is an Ode of *Lamentation*, *Satire* was originally an Ode of *Invective*. In this Species of Composition, we have seen, ARCHILOCHUS was most eminent [l]. It became afterwards a natural Appendage to Comedy, when that Poem assumed it's legitimate Form. But I do not find that, as a distinct Species, it ever had any Progression in ancient GREECE.

With Respect to the *Didactic*; it appears above, to have had it's natural Birth in the occasional Traits of *Remark*, *Proverb*, or *Exhortation*, thrown out in the Enthusiasm of the *musical Contest* or *Song-Feast* [m]. When Time, Experience, and Letters, had strengthened the *reasoning Powers* of the improving Tribe, then it would of Course receive the Addition of *speculative* and *natural* Subjects. This Improvement grew into a distinct Species in ancient GREECE; but few of these Poems have come down to us. Of this Kind, it is manifest from their Titles, were many of the Songs of LINUS, OR-

[l] See above, Sect. vi. Art. 5.

[m] See above, Sect. iv. Art. 6.

PHEUS, MUSÆUS, and THAMYRIS, composed on the Generation of the World, the Motions of the Stars, Chaos, Creation, and the Rise of Things [n]. HESIOD's *Theogony* still remains, as an original Model of this Species. Of the same Kind is his *Georgic*; which, though it be composed on a Subject *æconomical*, is yet *essentially* mixed with Doctrines *religious, moral, and political*. The Sentences of THEOGNIS are another Instance of *this Species*: which both with Respect to it's legitimate Form, and Dignity of Subject (still giving Allowance to the Manners and Opinions of the Times) seems to have received it's full Completion in ancient GREECE.

## S E C T. IX.

*On the Rise and Progressions of Poetry, in other European Countries.*

THUS we have traced the Progression of the ancient *Greek* Poetry in all it's Branches, through the various Stages of it's Power, down to it's final Corruption in the later Periods. As a Confirmation of the essential Principles offered in this Discourse, let us now consider this natural

[n] See above, Sect. iv. Art. 9.

Progreſſion, as it hath appeared in other Nations, where the poetic Arts never arrived at ſo compleat a Form ; where the Progreſſion ceaſed before any high Degree of Perfection came on, either through a Want of improving Literature, or by other Obſtructions from internal or external Cauſes.

The neareſt Approach we can make to the ſavage State, in any Inſtance drawn from the Records of Antiquity, ſeems to be found in the Hiſtory of the *Curetes*, or *Corybantes* of the Iſland of CRETE. STRABO and DIODORUS, who give us their Hiſtory, deſcribe them as barbarous Tribes of Men, living among Caves and Mountains, at once *Warriors*, *Prieſts*, *Poets*, and *Muſicians* ; who celebrated their public Feſtivals with enthuſiaſtic and clamorous Muſic, Song, and Dance, accompanied with Drums, Cymbals, and other noiſy Inſtruments, almoſt in the very Manner of the ſavage Iroquois [o]. RHADAMANTHUS firſt, and then MINOS, civilized this barbarous Route ; and regulated their Manners and their Poem and Melody, on the Model of the ſevere *Egypt*-

[o] STRABO, l. x. DIODORUS, l. v.

*tian* Legislation. After MINOS, THALES arose: In whom we find the united Characters of Legislator and Bard: He composed Laws, for the *Cretan* State, and sung them to his Lyre [*p*]. But the poetic and musical Arts being fixed to certain Forms by Law, we are not to wonder that their Progression stopped, as at SPARTA; which Commonwealth was modelled on the rigorous Establishment of CRETE.

With Respect to EGYPT, the Beginnings of that famous Kingdom are so lost in it's Antiquity, that we know nothing of the first Advances there made in Poem or Melody from their original Savage State. We only read, that in some early Period of Civilization their Forms were unalterably fixed by Law, and therefore all *Improvement* and *Corruption* alike prevented..

As to the more *northern* Nations of *Europe*, it is remarkable, that we know little of them from ancient History till the second

[*p*] As THALES succeeded RHADAMANTHUS and MINOS, who had *both* copied the EGYPTIAN Forms of Legislation; his composing *Laws in Verse* could only be the Effect of mere *Imitation*.

Period of Poetry and Music commenced, that is, till the *Legislator's* Character had been *separated* from that of the *Bard*. The clearest Instance of the Union of the *Legislator's* and *Bard's* Character is found in SNORRO STURLOSON, who, about five hundred and fifty Years ago, was at once the chief *Legislator* and most eminent *Bard* in the Isle of ICELAND [q]. In the second Period, we meet with the poetic and musical Character united in almost every northern Clime, under the revered Denomination of *Scaldi* or *Bards*. It hath been already observed, that ODIN the *Scythian* Legislator, boasted that the *Runic* Songs had been given him by the Gods [r]. A Circumstance which proves, that the Character of *Heroe* and *Bard* had been united in the Chiefs of that fierce and savage People, in the Period which immediately preceded him. We learn from SHERINGHAM and BARTHOLINE, that after the first Separation had been made, that the *Scaldi*, *Musicians*, or *Bards*, were a Race of Men highly honoured among the *Scythian* or *Danish* Tribes: That their

[q] Preface to NICHOLSON's *Irish Hist. Library*.

[r] See above, Sect. v.

Songs were of the *legislative* Cast ; that they sung the great Actions of their Ancestors, were themselves renowned Warriors, and kindled the Valour of their Armies by their Songs : That none were admitted of the Order, but those of the most distinguished Families [s] : That they were above the Meanness of Flattery ; and were revered, even in the Courts of Kings [t].

We meet with the *Gaulish Bards* under the same Period of Separation : But their Spirit seems to have been controuled by a more *peaceable* Species of Legislation. For STRABO tells us, that “ throughout the  
 “ whole District of GAUL, there are three  
 “ Kinds of Men, who are held in singular Honour : The *Bards*, the *Vates*, and  
 “ the *Druids* : The *Bards* are *Poets*, and  
 “ sing their Hymns : The *Vates* perform  
 “ *Sacrifice*, and *contemplate* the Nature of  
 “ Things : The *Druids*, besides this, hold  
 “ Discourses on *Morals*. They are esteemed  
 “ the justest of Men ; and therefore  
 “ are intrusted with the Determination of

[s] SHERINGHAM *de Angl. Orig.* p. 173.

[t] BARTHOLINUS *de Contemptu Mortis apud Danos*,  
 l. i. c. 8, 10.



“all Differences, public and private ; and  
 “sometimes peaceably end a Quarrel,  
 “when Armies are drawn out, and ready  
 “to decide it by the Sword [*u*].” The  
 Evidence of DIODORUS is still more par-  
 ticular ; and proves, that they were not  
 insensible to the original Sallies of comic  
 and farcaſtic Wit. “They ſing (ſaith He)  
 “to Instruments reſembling our Lyres ;  
 “*praiſing* ſome, and *ſatyrizing* others.  
 “When Armies are ready to engage, if  
 “they but come between, they immedi-  
 “ately put an End to the Battle ; as if  
 “their Warriors were ſo many wild  
 “Beaſts, which they had charmed by  
 “the Power of their Songs [*w*].

The *Britiſh Bards*, about the ſame  
 Time, were preciſely of the ſame Charac-  
 ter ; as we learn from their contemporary  
*Roman Authors* [*x*]. In a ſucceeding Pe-

[*u*] L. iv. [*w*] DIOD. l. v.

[*x*] A ſingular Circumſtance relative to the *Britiſh Bards* deſerves Notice. It is ſaid, that “although they  
 “were *inferior* to the *Druids* in Rank, yet they were  
 “*prior* in Antiquity.” [SAMMES’S *Phœnic. Ant. of Brit.*]  
 A Circumſtance, which, though improbable in it’s firſt  
 Appearance, is clearly accounted for, on the Principles  
 of this Diſſertation ; as it only implies that *Melody* and  
*Poem* were *prior* to religious Rites. [See Sect. iv. Art. 7.]

riod, when the Distractions of our Country, had driven the native *Britons* into WALES, an *English* King still felt their Power, amidst the Mountains and Poverty of that barren Region. He was so highly exasperated by the Influence of their Songs, which breathed the Spirit of Liberty and War, and retarded his Conquest over a hardy People, that he basely ordered them to be slain: An Event which hath lately given Birth to an elegant and sublime Strain of Poetry [y].

Of

[y] An Ode, by Mr. GRAY.

The following Memoir, relative to the State of the *Welsh Bards* in succeeding Times, may be acceptable to the curious Reader.

“ By the QUEEN.

“ **E**LIZABETH, by the Grace of GOD, of England,  
 “ France, and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the  
 “ Faith, &c: To our trusty and right well beloved Sir  
 “ Richard Bulkely Knight, Sir Rees Griffith Kt. Ellis  
 “ Price Esq. Dr. in civil Law, and one of our Council in  
 “ the Marchesse of Wales, William Mostyn, Jeuen Lloyd  
 “ Yale, John Salisbury of Rhug, Rice Thomas, Maurice  
 “ Wynne, William Lewis, Pierce Mostyn, Owen John  
 “ ap Howel Fichan, John William ap John, John Lewis  
 “ Owen, Morris Griffith, Symmd Thelwat, John Grif-  
 “ fith, Ellis ap William Lloyd, Robert Puleston, Harri  
 “ ap Harri, William Glynn, and Rees Hughes Esqs.  
 “ and to every of them Greeting.”

“ Whereas

Of the Genius of those *British Bards* who inhabited the northern Districts of the Island, we have a noble Proof in the Poems lately published under the Name of Os-

O 2

SIAN.

“ Whereas it is come to the Knowledg of the Lord  
 “ President, and other our Council in our Marchesse of  
 “ Wales, that vagrant and idle Persons naming them-  
 “ selves *Minstrels, Rythmers, and Bards*, are lately grown  
 “ into such *intolerable Multitude* within the Principality of  
 “ North Wales, that not only Gentlemen and others by  
 “ their *shameless Disorders* are oftentimes disquieted in  
 “ their Habitations, but also the *expert Minstrels* and  
 “ *Musicians* in *Tonge and Gunynge* thereby much discour-  
 “ aged to travaile in the Exercise and Practise of their  
 “ Knowledg, and also not a little hindred (*of*) Livings  
 “ and Preferment; The Reformation whereof, and the  
 “ putting these People in Order, the said Lord President  
 “ and Council have thought very necessary: And know-  
 “ ing you to be Men of both Wisdom and upright Deal-  
 “ ing, and also of Experience and good Knowledge in the  
 “ Scyence, have appointed and authorized You to be  
 “ Commissioners for that Purpose: And forasmuch as  
 “ our said Council, of late travailling in some Part of  
 “ the said Principality, had perfect Understanding by  
 “ credible Report, that the accustomed Place for the  
 “ Execution of the like Commission hath been heretofore  
 “ at Cayroes in our County of Flynt, and that William  
 “ Mostyn Esq: and his Ancestors have had the Gift and  
 “ bestowing of the *Sylver Harp* appertaining to the *Chief*  
 “ of that *Faculty*; and that a *Year's Warning* (at least)  
 “ hath been accustomed to be given of the *Assembly*  
 “ and Execution of the like Commission; Our said  
 “ Council

SIAN. These appear to have been composed and sung, during the second Period of Poetry and Music; that is, when the Bard's Profession had separated from that of the Legis-

“ Council have therefore appointed the Execution of  
 “ this Commission to be at the said Town of Cayroes,  
 “ the Monday next after the Feast of the Blessed Trinity  
 “ which shall be in the Year of our Lord 1568. And  
 “ therefore we require and command You by the Au-  
 “ thority of these Presents, not only to cause *open Pro-*  
 “ *clamation* to be made in all *Fairs, Market-Towns;* and  
 “ other *Places of Assembly* within our Counties of Aglere,  
 “ Carnarvon, Meryonydd, Denbigh and Flynt, that all  
 “ and every Person and Persons that intend to *maintain*  
 “ their *Living* by Name or Colour of *Minstrels, Ryth-*  
 “ *mers, or Bards,* within the Talaith of Aberffraw, com-  
 “ prehending the said five Shires, shall be and appear  
 “ before You the said Day and Place to *shew* their *Learn-*  
 “ *ings* accordingly: But also, that You, twenty, nine-  
 “ teen, eighteen, seventeen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen,  
 “ thirteen, twelve, eleven, ten, nine, eight, seven, or  
 “ six of you, whereof You the said Sir Richard Bulkely,  
 “ Sir Rees Griffith, Ellis Price, and William Mostyn  
 “ Esqs. or three or two of you, to be of the Number;  
 “ to repair to the said Place the Days aforesaid, and call-  
 “ ing to you such *expert Men* in the said *Faculty* of the  
 “ *Welsh Musick* as to You shall be thought convenient, to  
 “ proceed to the Execution of the Premises, and to ad-  
 “ mit such and so many, as by your Wisdoms and  
 “ Knowledges you shall find *worthy*, into and under the  
 “ *Degrees* heretofore (*in Use*) in semblable Sort to *use,*  
 “ *exercise,* and *follow* the *Sciences* and *Faculties* of their  
 “ *Pro-*

Legislator, yet still retained it's Power and Dignity in full Union. For OSSIAN, the declared Author of the Poems, was the Son of the royal FINGAL, accompanied

O 3

him

“ *Professions*, in such decent Order as shall appertain to  
 “ each of their Degrees, and as your Discretions and  
 “ Wifdoms shall prescribe unto them : Giving freight  
 “ Monition and Commandment in our Name and on our  
 “ Behalf to the rest not worthy, that they return to some  
 “ honest Labour, and due Exercise, such as they be most  
 “ apt unto for Maintenance of their Living, upon Pain  
 “ to be taken as sturdy and idle Vagabonds, and to be  
 “ used according to the Laws and Statutes provided in  
 “ that Behalf ; letting You with our said Council look  
 “ for Advertisement, by Certificate at your Hands, of  
 “ your Doings in the Execution of the said Premises ;  
 “ foreseeing in any wise, that upon the said Assembly the  
 “ Peace and good Order be observed and kept accord-  
 “ ingly ; ascertaining you that the said William Mostyn  
 “ hath promised to see Furniture and Things necessary  
 “ provided for that Assembly, at the Place aforesaid.

“ Given under our Signet at our City of Chester, the  
 “ twenty third of October in the ninth Year of  
 “ our Reign, 1567.”

“ Signed

“ Her Highness's Counsaill

“ in the Marcheſſe of Wales.

“ *N. B.* This Commission was copy'd exactly from  
 “ the Original now at Mostyn, A. D. 1693 :  
 “ Where the *Silver Harp* also is.”

From this Commission it appears, 1<sup>st</sup>, That although many of the *Bards* were massacred by EDWARD the First,

yet

him in his Wars, and sung his Atchievements to the Harp. These Poems give a noble Confirmation to many of the Principles advanced in this Analysis. They are of various Forms ; though none of them properly unmixed. The *Song*, in the Days of this sublime and original Bard, appears evidently to have worn the *inartificial* and *mixed* Forms of Composition, which we have found generally and of Course to prevail in the early Periods. Thus, FINGAL is chiefly *Epic* ; yet the *hymnal* Species abounds in it : Others are *dramatic* ; yet in these, the *narrative* often takes Place : Others, again, are in the Form of *Odes* ; yet even these

yet the whole *Order* was by no Means exterminated. 2dly, That in the Reign of ELIZABETH, Abuses had crept on among the *Welsh Bards*, similar to those which are recorded of the *Irish*. 3dly, That public *Contests* for *poetic* and *musical* Fame had been established in *Wales* from ancient Times. 4tly, That these *Contests* are now ceased.

In Wotton's "*Leges Wallicæ*," (Append. p. 547, 548.) there are two Laws of Henry the Fourth recorded, which relate to the Prevention of the Abuses of the Bard's Profession ; but in such general Terms, that nothing relative to the particular State of their Music and Poetry can be collected from them.

are strongly mixed and marked with the *Epic* and *dramatic* Manner [z].

The natural Flame of savage Music and Poetry, is now almost entirely quenched

[z] As these Circumstances are internal Proofs of the *Antiquity* of the Poems ; so there are other collateral Evidences of the same Nature, which seem clearly to confirm it. Such are the grand Simplicity of Imagery and Diction, the strong Draughts of rude Manners and uncultivated Scenes of Nature, which abound in all these Poems ; Pictures, which no civilized Modern could ever imbibe in their Strength, nor consequently could ever throw out. Such, again, are the frequent Allusions (wrought into the very Essence of the Poems) to the Principles of the old *Celtic* Religion, which in ancient Times had overspread these Kingdoms : Of this Nature is That which the Translator calls the *most extravagant Fiction* in all OSSIAN'S Poems ; I mean, the Battle between FINGAL, and the Ghost or Spirit of LODA\* : Now this though it carries the Appearance of Extravagance and ill-judged Improbability, yet, upon a nearer View, will be found to contain an internal Evidence of the *Antiquity* of the Poem ; as it is drawn from the very Essence of the old *Celtic* Belief. Thus speaks the learned BARTHOLINE : —“ Summa Audacia credebatur Lucta cum Spectris non formidata †.” “ It was esteemed the highest Act of Courage, to dare to encounter a Ghost.”—But it must be observed, that the Spirit of their chief God ODIN was an Exception to this Rule : The Living and the Dead were all deemed Subject to his Controul : therefore, the Spirit of LODA was not the Spirit of ODIN, but of some inferior Deity.

\* *Carric-Thura* : A Poem.

† *De Contemptu Mortis apud Danos*, l. ii. c. 2.

in

in the several Parts of this Island. In *England*, it lost it's Power by the Migration of the native *Britons* into *WALES*: In *Wales*, it was subdued by the Cruelty of *EDWARD*: In the Highlands of *SCOTLAND*, the Writer is well informed, that the Bard's Profession was upheld in some Degree of Honour, till near the Beginning of this Century. About that Time, the Communication of the Inhabitants with the more civilized Parts of the Kingdom by Degrees assimilated their Manners to those of their Neighbours; by which Means the Profession became extinct [a].

The History of the *Irish Bards* is perhaps of all others the most extraordinary; and will therefore deserve a particular Regard. History doth not carry us up to the first Period, in which the *Legislator's* and *Bard's* Character are united in the same Person. But of the second

[a] About the Close of the last Century, *JOHN GLASS* and *JOHN MACDONALD*, *Bards* by Profession, who resided and were respected as such in the Houses of two *Highland Chiefs*, travelled fifty Miles and met by Appointment in *LOCHABER*, to vindicate their own Honour and that of their respective Chiefs at a public Meeting, in a poetic and musical Contest.

Period



Period we have large Accounts in the *Irish* Historians. For we are informed, there were three principal Tribes among the ancient *Irish*. “The First were *Leaders, Chiefs, or Legislators*: The Second “were *Druids or Priests*: The Third were “*Bards*. The two last were honoured “with an Appellation equivalent to the “Name of *Gods* [b].”

The *Bards* had Estates settled on them, that they might be free from worldly Cares: They lived in perfect Independence, and were obliged to no Service: Their Persons were inviolable: To kill them, was esteemed the blackest Crime; and it was held an Act of Sacrilege to seize their Estates, even for the public Service, and in Times of the greatest Distress [c].

The Profession was hereditary: But when the *Bard* died, his Estate descended not to his eldest Son, but to the most accomplished of his Family in the poetic and musical Profession. A Law was made by OLLAMH FODHLA, one of their greatest Kings, that none should be in-

[b] KEATING's *Hist. of IRELAND*, p. 48.

[c] *Ibid.* p. 132.

vested with the Dignity of a *Bard*, but those of the most illustrious Families [*d*].

The *Bards*, the *Druids*, and *Nobility*, were summoned by the same King, to a *triennial Festival*, which was thus by him established, to transmit to Posterity the *Authentic Songs* of the *Bards*, as the Materials of their future Histories. In Consequence of this, the approved Songs of the ancient Bards were preserved in the Custody of the King's Antiquary; and are appealed to by KEATING, as the Foundation of his History [*e*]. Many of them were fabulous; but this Circumstance hath no essential Relation to our present Inquiry [*f*].

Garments of different Colour were appropriated to the various Ranks of the Kingdom: So high was the Power and

[*d*] KEATING's *Hist.* of IRELAND, p. 132, &c.

[*e*] Ibid. p. 132. & Preface, p. 23.

[*f*] The Irish Historians inform us, that ST PATRICK, when he converted the Kingdom to Christianity, destroyed no less than three hundred Volumes of these ancient Pagan Songs, on a Principle of religious Zeal.—How many FINGALS may *there* have been lost!—I fancy, a *Conclave* of *true Catholic Poets*, instead of *fainting* him, would have sent him to *Purgatory* for his Pains.

Dignity of the *Bards*, that they wore the *same Colour* with the *royal Family* [g].

Thus invested with Honours, Wealth, and Power; and possessed of an Art which gave them a natural Influence over the Minds of the People; we find, that about the Year 558, they had become insolent, deeply corrupted, and dangerous.

Hence, the reigning King convened a general Council of the Nobility and Gentry (for Christianity being now planted in IRELAND, the *Druids* were no more) with Intention to expel them the Island. They were now become a Kind of *sacred Order*, or *College*; which was grown so numerous, that one third of the Kingdom is said to have ranked themselves in this Class, as a safe Asylum for Idleness and Hypocrisy. When the *Principal Bards* assembled in a Body to divert this impending Storm, they met, to the Number of a *Thousand*. This may account for the Numbers that claimed to be of the Profession; for every *Principal Bard* retained *thirty* of inferior Note, as his Attendants; and a *Bard* of the *second Order*

[g] KEATING'S *Hist. of IRELAND*, p. 127.

was followed by a Retinue of *fifteen*. In this Convention, after many Debates, it was resolved that they should leave the Island, and retire into SCOTLAND, before the Sentence of their Banishment was pronounced.—However, the Sentence was mitigated: They were allowed to disperse themselves over the Island, and promised to live in a Manner less offensive to the Public [*b*].

In a succeeding, and no very distant Period, we find them again grown troublesome to the Kings, who complained of them, as a Burthen to the People, lazy, covetous, and insatiable. On this, their Number was lessened and regulated: By the Advice of St COLUM CILL, every provincial *Chief* had *one* learned *Bard* allowed him in his Retinue, to *record* the *Atchievements* of his Family: Their Independence, with a competent Revenue, was preserved: And this Regulation was the Standard, by which the Society of Bards were directed in succeeding Ages [*i*].

'Tis to be observed, that in some unrecorded Period, a *Separation* had taken Place

[*b*] KEATING'S *Hist.* of IRELAND, p. 370, &c.

[*i*] *Ibid.* p. 380, 381.

in the *Bard's* Profession: In the early Times, the Offices of *Poet* and *Lyrift* were united in the same Person: In the later Ages, it appears, that the *Bard* only composed the *Poem*; and that it was *fung* by a *Rhapsodist* or *Harper* at the public Festivals.

However, we find that on the Extinction of Learning, and Increase of Barbarism in this Kingdom, the native Vigour of the poetic Stock again shot up in a succeeding Age; and for Want of a proper Culture, was again become one of the ruling Evils of the Country, in the Time of SPENSER; Who gives the following animated Description of their *Songs* and *Character*: “ There is amongst the *Irish* a  
 “ certain Kind of People called *Bardes*,  
 “ which are to them instead of *Poets*,  
 “ whose Profession is to set forth the  
 “ *Praises* or *Dispraises* of Men in their  
 “ Poems or Rythmes; the which are  
 “ had in so high Regard and Estimation  
 “ amongst them, that none dare displease  
 “ them for Fear to run into Reproach  
 “ through their Offence, and to be made  
 “ infamous in the Mouths of all Men.  
 “ For their Verses are taken up with a ge-  
 “ neral

“ neral Applause, and usually *sung* at all  
 “ *Feasts* and *Meetings* by certain *other Per-*  
 “ *sons*, whose proper Function that is, who  
 “ also receive for the same great Rewards  
 “ and Reputation amongst them.”——  
 “ These *Irish Bardes* are for the most  
 “ Part so far from instructing young Men  
 “ in *moral* Discipline, that they themselves  
 “ do more deserve to be sharply discipli-  
 “ ned: For they seldom use to choose unto  
 “ themselves the Doings of *good* Men for  
 “ the Arguments of their Poems; but  
 “ whomsoever they find to be most *licen-*  
 “ *tious* of Life, most *bold* and *lawless* in his  
 “ Doings, most *dangerous* and *desperate* in  
 “ all Parts of Disobedience and rebellious  
 “ Disposition; Him they *set up* and *glorify*  
 “ in their *Rythmes*, Him they *praise* to the  
 “ *People*, and to *young* Men make an *Ex-*  
 “ *ample* to follow.”——Thus “ evil Things  
 “ being decked and attired with the gay  
 “ Attire of goodly Words, may easily de-  
 “ ceive and carry away the Affection of a  
 “ young Mind that is not well stayed, but  
 “ desirous by some bold Adventures to  
 “ make Proof of himself. For being (as  
 “ they all be) brought up idely without  
 “ Awe of Parents, without Precepts of  
 “ Masters,

“ Masters, and without Fear of Offence;  
 “ not being directed, nor employed in any  
 “ Course of Life which may carry them to  
 “ Virtue; will easily be drawn to follow  
 “ such as any shall set before them: For  
 “ a young Mind cannot rest: If he be not  
 “ still busied in some Goodness, he will  
 “ find himself such Business, as shall soon  
 “ busy all about him. In which, if he  
 “ shall find any to praise him, and to give  
 “ him Encouragement, as those *Bardes*  
 “ and *Rythmers* do for little Reward, or a  
 “ a Share of a *stolen Cow*, then waxeth  
 “ he most insolent and half mad with the  
 “ Love of himself, and his own lewd  
 “ Deeds. And as for Words to set off  
 “ such Lewdness, it is not hard for them  
 “ to give a goodly and painted Shew  
 “ thereunto, borrowed even from the Praises  
 “ which are proper to Virtue itself: As of  
 “ a most notorious *Thief* and wicked *Out-*  
 “ *law*, which had lived all his Life-Time  
 “ of *Spoils* and *Robberies*, one of their  
 “ *Bardes* in his Praise will say, that he  
 “ was none of the idle *Milk-Sops* that was  
 “ brought up by the *Fire-side*; but that  
 “ most of his Days he spent in *Arms* and  
 “ valiant *Enterprises*: That he did never  
 “ eat

“ eat his Meat, before he had won it  
 “ with his Sword : That he lay not all  
 “ Night flugging in a Cabin under his  
 “ Mantle ; but used commonly to keep  
 “ others waking to defend their Lives ; and  
 “ did light his Candle at the Flames of their  
 “ Houses, to lead him in the Darknefs :  
 “ That the Day was his Night, and the  
 “ Night his Day : That he loved not to be  
 “ long wooing of Wenches to yield to him ;  
 “ but where he came, he took by Force  
 “ the Spoil of other Men’s Love, and  
 “ left but Lamentation to their Lovers :  
 “ That his Music was not the Harp, nor  
 “ Lays of Love, but the Cries of People,  
 “ and the clashing of Armour : And fi-  
 “ nally, that he died, not bewailed of  
 “ many, but made many wail when he  
 “ died, that dearly bought his Death.”—  
 “ I have caused divers of these Poems to  
 “ be translated unto me, that I might  
 “ understand them : And surely, they fa-  
 “ voured of *sweet Wit* and *good Inven-*  
 “ *tion* ; but *skilled not* of the *goodly Orna-*  
 “ *ments* of Poetry : Yet were they sprin-  
 “ kled with some *pretty Flowers* of their  
 “ *natural Device*, which gave good Grace  
 “ and Comeliness unto them : The which  
 “ it



“ it is great *Pity* to see so *abused*, to the  
 “ *gracing* of *Wickedness* and *Vice*, which  
 “ with good *Usage* would serve to adorn  
 “ and beautify *Virtue* [k].”

This Account of the *Irish Bards* is not inserted here, as a mere History of Facts; but with a farther View of confirming the Principles on which this Dissertation is built. And the Writer thinks that all the Facts (from the *early State* of the *Bards* when they were esteemed as *Gods*, down to their *last Condition* when they were sunk into the *Abettors* of *Thieving* and *Robbery*) arise so naturally from the Principles given above, that he is disposed to leave the particular Application to the Reader's Sagacity.

## S E C T. X.

*Of the natural Progressions of Poetry in  
 CHINA, PERU, and INDIA.*

SUCH have been the natural *Progressions* of *Poetry*, in the barbarous Nations of EUROPE. If we travel to the Extremes of the East and West, on the

[k] SPENSER'S View of the State of IRELAND.

vast Continents of ASIA and AMERICA, we shall find new and strong Confirmations of the *Progressions* of this Art, as it hath been here deduced from savage Life and Manners.

The *Chinese* have ever been of a *mild* and *peaceable* Character: Their *Poem* and *Melody* will be found analogous. 'Tis generally supposed that CONFUCIUS established their *Music* and *Rites*: but it appears from some curious Fragments of ancient *Chinese* History, that *Music* and the *Rites* existed in *Union* long before the Age of that Philosopher [l]. TCHOYONG, the sixteenth "Emperor of the ninth Period, hearing "a Concert of Birds, invented a Species "of Music, whose Harmony was irresist- "able. It touched the intelligent Soul, "and calmed the Heart of Man; so that "the external Senses were found, the Hu- "mours in a just Poise, and the Life of "Man lengthened [m]." Here we find the genuine Picture of a *Chief*, at once *Legislator* and *Bard*, civilizing a savage People.

[l] *Extraits des Hist. Chinois*, published by Mr COUET, p. 550. [m] *Ib.* p. 552.

The *Dance* was improved in the same Manner, by the twentieth King of the ninth Period, to the Ends of peaceful Life [n]. And of such Importance has this Branch of the musical Art been always held in CHINA, that it is an established Maxim, “that you may judge of any King’s Reign, by the *Dances* that are then in Use [o].”

These Evidences are traditionary, and relate to the fabulous Times: But even in a later Period, we find the *King’s* and *Bard’s* Character united, in the Person of FOU-HI, their first great imperial Legislator. “FOU-HI delivered the Laws of Music: After he had invented the Art of *Fishing*, he composed a *Song* for those who exercised that Art. He made a *Lyre*, with Strings of *Silk*, to banish all Impurity of Heart: And in his Time the *Rites* and *Music* were in great *Perfection* [p].” All this is evidently in the true Spirit of a peaceable Legislation. “CHIN-NONG (a succeeding Emperor) composed Songs on the *Fertility* of

[n] *Extraits des Hist. Chinois*, published by Mr. GOUET, p. 555. [o] *Ib.* p. 556. [p] *Ib.* p. 567.

“ the Earth. He made a beautiful *Lyre*,  
 “ and a *Guitar* adorned with precious  
 “ Stones, which produced a noble Har-  
 “ mony, curbed the Passions, and ele-  
 “ vated Man to *Virtue* and heavenly  
 “ *Truth* [q].” This is the same Character continued under a Period of higher Civilization. The last Emperor whom I find to have retained the poetic or musical Character, was CHAO-HAO ; who is said to have invented “ a new Species of  
 “ Music, to unite Men with superior Be-  
 “ ings.” After him, the *complex* Office seems to have *separated* : And the first great *Bardlike* Character we meet with is CONFUCIUS, who established *Music* and the *Rites*, according to that Form which they still maintain in CHINA [r]. For here, as in ancient EGYPT, CRETE, and SPARTA, every thing is unalterably fixed by Law ; by which Means, Improvement and Corruption are alike prevented.

With Respect to the Extent of the *Progression* of Music in this vast Empire ; it appears that they have no musical No-

[q] *Extraits des Hist. Chinois*, published by Mr. GOUGET, p. 572. [r] DU HALDE *Hist. Chinois*.

tation ; that Composition in *Parts* is altogether unknown ; and that the whole *Choir* sings the *same* Melody : That their Music is altogether of the *diatonic Kind*, and even wretched to an *European Ear* [s] : Yet they boast of it's wonderful Powers in former Times : Whence some of the Historians seem to guess that it hath degenerated ; while in reality, no other Consequence can be justly drawn, but that either the People are less *ignorant* and *barbarous* ; or that Music is now less assiduously and powerfully *applied* ; or that certain *Separations* have ensued, similar to those which took Place in ancient GREECE : Any of which Causes must naturally destroy it's Force.

It appears, however, that the Progression had advanced so far in some former Period, prior to CONFUCIUS, as to produce *dramatic Representation*, mixed with *Song* : And in Conformity to the Principles given above, we find, that as they regard not the *Unities* of Action, Place, or Time, so neither is any *continued Choir* in use ; though there be manifest Remains of it

[s] See Specimens of it, in DU HALDE.

in their *Plays*: For at the Conclusion of Scenes or Acts, as well as at other Times when a *pathetic* Circumstance occurs, the Persons of the Play, instead of *declaiming*, begin to *sing*. The *Prologue* resembles that uncouth one of GREECE, that is, he tells you *who* he is, and *what* is his *Errand*. All their Plays have a *moral* or *political* Direction, suited to the Genius of the People and the State. They know not the Difference between *Tragedy* and *Comedy*; another Circumstance which confirms the Principle given above, concerning the true Rise and Distinction of these two Kinds in GREECE: For the *Chinese*, as they have ever been of a *timid* and *peaceable* Character, so neither are they given to *Raillery* or *Sarcasm*, but altogether to *Civility* and mutual *Respect*. Hence, neither the *tragic* nor *comic* Drama could probably arise, so as to be marked as a *distinct Species*. Accordingly, their *Plays* are generally of an *intermediate* Cast, between *Terror* and *Pity* on the one Hand, *Sarcasm* or *Ridicule* on the other. The "*little Orphan of CHINA*," indeed, which is given as a Specimen by DU HALDE, borders on the *tragic Species*: But this  
Play

Play is but one of a hundred, most of which are of a different Cast; and was selected by him, because he thought it the best adapted in it's Genius, to the Spirit and Taste of the *Europeans*: For he tells us expressly, that the general Character of their Plays is altogether different from this; that they are commonly of a *middle* Kind, and neither *Tragedy* nor *Comedy*. Another Circumstance of the Progression must be marked; which is, that their *Actors* are a *separate* Rank from their *Poets*; that they are formed into *Companies*, and have lost their original Dignity of Office and Character.

In the ancient Kingdom of PERU, the Progression of *Poem* and *Melody* had reached the same Period, though somewhat different in it's Circumstances. GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA informs us, that their fabulous Songs were innumerable; that he had heard many, and learnt some of them, from his Ancestors, who were the last of the royal Family of the INCAS. They were of various Kinds, founded on a Variety of Passion, religious, warlike, and amorous. They had invented a Kind of *unequal Pipe*, formed of Reeds of different

Lengths, precisely the same with that of ancient GREECE. They had also a Species of Flute, with four or five Stops: Their Music was simple, like that of all unpolished Countries. Their INCAS or *Chiefs* had been *Poets* or *Bards* in the early Periods; and the Author of the Commentaries gives a Poem composed by one of them, which bears all the Marks of a spirited and savage Original. They had their *dramatic* Representations, in Part *resembling*, and in Part *differing* from those of the *Chinese*. Their Manners and Character, *brave* though not *ferocious*, had naturally produced *Tragedy*, though of a Kind rather *grand* than *terrible* [t]. But their *mild Temper*, in Time of *Peace* little given to *Sarcasm*, seems to have *prevented* the Birth of *Comedy*. GARCILASSO, indeed, divides their *Drama* into *Tragedy* and *Comedy*: But this was manifestly the Effect of his own preconceived Opinions, and arose from a Habit of considering all *dramatic* Composition as belonging to one of these *Species*. For he tells us that “ their *Tragedies* represented their military  
“ *Exploits*; the *Triumphs*, *Victories*, and

[t] See above, Sect. v. Art. 22.



“ *heroic Actions* of their renowned Men:  
 “ And the Subject or Design of their  
 “ Comedies was to demonstrate the Man-  
 “ ner of good *Husbandry* in *cultivating*  
 “ and manuring their *Fields*, and to shew  
 “ the Management of domestic Affairs, with  
 “ other familiar Matters.” A Circumstance,  
 which ought to give them the Title of  
*Bucolic* or *Georgic Drama*, rather than that  
 of *Comedy*. For not a Word occurs con-  
 cerning *Ridicule* or *Character*; the Union  
 of which two Circumstances may seem  
 to constitute the *Essence* of *true Comedy*.  
 These Plays were *composed* by the *Amau-*  
*tas* or *Bards*, whose Office was separated  
 from that of the INCAS, but still held  
 in Honour, as in other barbarous Poli-  
 ties. But in another Respect, the Pro-  
 gression was different from that in CHI-  
 NA. The *Actors* maintained the original  
 Dignity which they had held in the early  
 Periods: For the *Lords* and *Officers* of  
 the Court were the *Actors*; and as soon  
 as the Play was ended, they took their  
*Places* according to their *Degrees* [u].

[u] GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA *Comment. Real.* l. ii.  
 c. 14. 15.

To these we may add one Instance more, concerning the natural Progression of Poetry: An Instance less known, yet more singular than any of these already given. When the *Christian Missionaries* arrived on the Coast of *proper India*, they found a Sect called the "*Christians of St. THOMAS*," living in great Simplicity and Innocence; and retaining many of the original Customs of their savage Forefathers [w]; among others, they found these Christians, as well as the Pagans of the Country, possessed of rude *Poetry* and *Music*, in their *natural Union* and *Power*. They acquiesced in the Application of these Arts, already made by the Christian Tribe, and wisely laid hold of their Influence, for the Conversion of the Pagan Natives. Under these Circumstances, the following Accounts will appear natural and probable, on the Principles already delivered.

First, it appears, that the general and fundamental Practice of *singing the Praise of great Men*, had been maintained from the most ancient Times. In Consequence

[w] LA CROZE *Hist. du Christ.* p. 38, &c.

of this, “ The Synode being ended, the  
 “ Partisans of the Union composed in the  
 “ *Malabar* Tongue a long *Ode* or *Song*,  
 “ which contained the whole *History* of  
 “ the *Portuguese* *Prelate*, and a pompous  
 “ Detail of what had passed at the Sy-  
 “ nod. This Nation hath preserved the  
 “ ancient Custom of consecrating to Pos-  
 “ terity by this Kind of Poem all the  
 “ most remarkable Events. The Song  
 “ was caught and immediately dispersed  
 “ every where; and during the Visits  
 “ which the Prelate made, the People  
 “ sung it in his Presence; which to-  
 “ gether with their *Dances* and *Musick*  
 “ made the chief Part of his Entertain-  
 “ ment [x]. When he went to ANGA-  
 “ MALE, the Way was spread with Car-  
 “ pets: And it was a fine Sight, to see  
 “ a *Child* of six Years old, very beauti-  
 “ ful, and richly dressed, who *sung* melo-  
 “ diously the whole *Song* we have spoken  
 “ of, as containing the *Labours* of the  
 “ *Prelate* [y].

The religious *Song* and *Dance* were no less remarkably and singularly maintained

[x] LA CROZE *Hist. du Christ.* p. 282.

[y] *Ib.* p. 294.

in a Kind of imperfect *Union*, as they had been transferred from *Pagan Objects* to those of *Christianity*. “ In the “ same Place, the *Christian Malabars*, to “ amuse the Archbishop, gave him a *Ball* “ after the Manner of the Country. It “ was of so singular a Nature, that I am “ persuaded, the Reader will not be dis- “ pleased with the Description. These “ *Dances* are generally practised at *Night*. “ This begun at Eight in the Evening, “ and lasted till an Hour after Midnight. “ None but the Men dance ; and their “ Modesty and Reserve are admirable. “ Before the *Dance* begins they all make “ the *Sign* of the *Cross*, and *sing* the *Lord’s* “ *Prayer*, which is followed by a *Hymn*, “ in Honour of *St. Thomas*. Their other “ *Songs* rowl chiefly on the *illustrious Ac-* “ *tions* of their *Forefathers*, or the *Virtues* “ of their *Saints*. In a Word, this Enter- “ tainment has all the Air of an *Act* of “ *Devotion* ; on which the *Portuguese His-* “ *torian* takes Occasion to inveigh against “ the *prophane Songs* of the *Europeans*, “ which seem composed only to inspire “ *Debauch* and *Immodesty* [z].”

[z] LA CROZE *Hist. du Christ.* p. 296.

The

The Missionaries who have visited the opposite Coast of COROMANDEL, give us Proof, that the *Progression* of Poetry had not stopped at this early Period, but advanced to *theatrical Representation*; which, we shall see, they were bold enough to apply even to the great Purpose of *Conversion*. “ In this Country they have an  
 “ extreme Passion for the *Theatre*. Good  
 “ Poets are held in great *Veneration* among  
 “ this People, who are by no Means of  
 “ a barbarous Cast. In INDIA, Poetry  
 “ enjoys the Favour of the Great. They  
 “ give it's young Professors the Honour  
 “ of the *Palanquin*, which is a very  
 “ high Distinction. The *Theatre*, which  
 “ was prepared near our Church, was of  
 “ vast Extent. , Indeed I found not there  
 “ the Rules of HORACE or BOILEAU put  
 “ in Practice ; but was agreeably sur-  
 “ prized to find the *Acts* distinguished,  
 “ and varied with *Interludes* or *Choirs*,  
 “ the Scenes well connected, the Ma-  
 “ chines judiciously invented, Art in the  
 “ Conduct of the Piece, Taste in the Dres-  
 “ ses, Propriety in the *Dances*, and a Kind of  
 “ *Music*, harmonious though *irregular* and  
 “ *wild*. The *Actors* displayed great *Free-*  
*dom*

“ *dom* and *Dignity* in their Speech: They  
 “ were taken from one of the *Superior*  
 “ *Orders* or *Castes*. Their Memory was  
 “ good, and there were *no Prompters*.  
 “ That which edified me most was, that  
 “ the Piece began with an authentic  
 “ Profession of Christianity: And con-  
 “ tained the keenest *Ridicule* and severest  
 “ *Investives* on the *Gods* of the Country:  
 “ Such are the *Christian Tragedies*, which  
 “ they oppose here to the *prophane Tra-*  
 “ *gedies* of the *Idolaters* [a]; and they are  
 “ for this Reason, an excellent Mean of  
 “ Conversion [b].—The Audience was com-  
 “ posed of at least twenty thousand Souls;  
 “ who listened in profound Silence.—The  
 “ Character of their Theatre is that of a  
 “ *lively* and *perpetual Action*; and a strict  
 “ Caution of *avoiding long Speeches*, with-  
 “ out proper *Breaks* [c].

Such is the State of *Poem* and *Melody* in proper INDIA. Some of it's Appear-

[a] Hence it appears that the *History* of their *Gods* made the Subject of their *native* theatrical Representations.

[b] How far this was a proper Method of Conversion, will be considered in the Work advertised at the End of this Dissertation.

[c] *Lettres Edifiantes, Recueil*, xviii, p. 28.

ances are singular; and at first View, may seem unnatural. But after a mature Consideration of what has been delivered on the Rise, Union, Progression, and Separation of these Arts in ancient GREECE, 'tis presumed, the sensible Reader will easily account for all these apparent Singularities.

## S E C T. XL.

*Of the State of Poetry amongst the ancient Hebrews.*

LET us now, in Conclusion, analyze the State of *Poetry*, among the ancient *Hebrews*.

The leading singularity of this extraordinary People was their Rejection of Idolatry, and their established Worship of the *one God*, the *Creator* of the World. As this Circumstance gave a peculiar Colour to their *Religion*; so, upon the Principles of this Dissertation it will follow, that it must give a Peculiar Turn to their *Poetry*, because we have seen, that the Genius of the *original Poetry* of every Country depends on it's *Religion* as it's chief *Basis*.

In

In Consequence of this Principle, their *Poem* was chiefly dedicated to the *Celebration* of the *true God*, the *Creator* of all Things : At other Times it is composed of *moral Exhortations*, delivered as the Dictates of his Will, or thrown out in prophetic Raptures concerning the great Intents of his Providence.—Hence the *Hymn*, *Ode*, or poetic *Rapture*, which we have found to be naturally the first Form of Composition among all Nations, appeared with unrivaled Splendor in the *Hebrew Poetry*, because it's *Object* is so much *Superior* to that of other Nations : The one being no more than the limited and narrow Power of supposed *local Gods* ; the other, the Omnipotence and Wisdom of an *eternal and universal Creator*. Of this Distinction their *Bards* were fully sensible. “ As for the Gods of the Hea-  
 “ then, they are but *Idols* ; but it is the  
 “ *Lord*, that *made the Heavens*.” The Book of *Psalms*, the *Lamentations*, the *Songs of MOSES*, *DAVID*, *ISAIAH*, and other *Prophets*, all written in Measure, and sung by those who composed them, are so many striking Instances of the true and unequalled Sublime.

With



With Respect to the *Form*, it may be observed, that their *Songs* or *Hymns* are of that *mixed* Species which naturally ariseth first, before any Separations take Place, or produce the several distinct Species of Composition. Though the *hymnal* Form be chiefly *predominant*, yet we find them frequently to be a Mixture of *Ode*, *Narration*, and *Dialogue*; and thus they contain the Seeds or Principles of the three great succeeding Kinds, of *unmixed Ode*; *Epic*, and *Tragedy*.

It may be regarded as an extraordinary Circumstance, that this first *mixed* Form of Composition should have continued unchanged for a Period of at least a thousand Years; and that from first to last it should never move forward, so as to produce the *Epic* and *Dramatic* Species: But on Examination it will appear, that the same Cause (the Worship of the one God) which produced the highest Degree of Sublime in the *hymnal* Species, naturally *checked* the Course of Poetry among the JEWS; and prevented that *Progression* which we have found to arise from the natural State of Things, in *Pagan* Countries.

With Respect to the *Epic Poem*, we have seen that, in it's first and original Conception and Formation, it is no other than "A fabulous History, rowling chiefly on the great Actions of the Gods and Heroes of the Nation; and composed under certain Limitations with Respect to it's Manner, for the Ends of Pleasure, "Admiration, and Instruction." Hence, the *true GOD* being the sole Object of the Adoration of the *HEBREWS*, and their Records being the sacred Depositary of the *History* of his *Providence*, the Truth of which it was deemed the highest Crime to violate; the Invention and Construction of an *Epic Fable* could never be the Result of a *natural* and *untaught Progression*.

If the *Epic Form* was thus naturally prevented by the Severity of Truth, the first Form of *Tragedy*, and *dramatic Exhibition* must of Course be checked from the same Principle: For we have seen that the native and original *tragic Species* is but an *Union* of the *Ode* and *Epic Fable* animated by *personal Representation*: To this we may subjoin, that an additional Absurdity would here present itself: The Absurdity of cloathing the *Deity* in a visible,

ble and *human Form*: A Circumstance strictly forbidden by the *Jewish Law*.

If it be said, that although these Reasons are good, against their introducing the *Deity* as the leading Subject either of *Epic* or *dramatic Fable*, yet still their *Heroes* might have furnished Subjects for *Both*: We may reply, that all the great Actions of their Heroes were so intimately connected with the important History of Providence, which this People were destined both to *execute* and *preserve*, that even *These* became improper Subjects for the Mixture and Alloy of Fable. And farther; The very Tendency of Fancy towards such a Progression of Poetry was quenched *here* also, in it's first Conception. For the first and original Enthusiasms of an untaught Tribe are awakened by the Belief, that their deceased Heroes are advanced to the Rank of *Gods*, and still maintain their former *Relation* and *Affection* to their native *Country*: Hence the Imagination is kindled by Hope of their Favour and Assistance: Hence Adoration riseth; flattering Fables of their Power, Prowess, and Atchievements are invented; and the Genius of *Epic* and *Tragic Song*

is awakened into Action. But where (as among the JEWS) their greatest Men are represented as what they were, weak, ignorant, and mortal; often humbled for their Sins; always under the Controul of an over-ruling Providence; and after Death, lost to every earthly Connection; here, the first natural Enthusiasms of the Soul could meet with no Objects to excite them: A Collision was wanting: And the artless Mind, instructed only in sacred Things, returned of itself to the unmixed and inartificial Celebration of the *all-wise* and *all-powerful* GOD.

As, from these Causes, the Forms of their *Poem* never had any Progression; so, it seems probable, that their *Melody* stood still, in the same Manner. It's Application was chiefly to the Service of Religion; and as their Hymn continued unchanged in it's Genius, we may reasonably believe, that the Melody which accompanied it, had the same Fate. For though there was nothing particular ordained, with Respect to Music, in the *Mosaic* Law; yet, where almost every other Circumstance relative to Worship was particularly prescribed, this Severity of Institution would give a  
Kind

Kind of Sanctity to every ancient Custom that stood connected with it; and hence their Modes of Melody would probably remain unchanged. CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS informs us, that their Hymns were composed in the *Dorian Mode* [*d*]: Which, whatever it was, we know, to have been one of the most *ancient*, as well as *grave* and *sedate*; and therefore fit for the Service of the Temple.—Their Instruments were various, but simple: That which DAVID chiefly used, appears to have been the *Nabla* or *Trigonon*; a three-cornered Instrument, of the *Harp-Species*. It's Compass we know from his own Authority; and that it was an Instrument of *ten Strings*. We may be assured, too, that his Melody was not only simple, but single: For he must have held his Harp with one Hand, and played with the other, when he led the *religious Dance* before the Ark.

As their *Poem* and *Melody*, so their *Dance* seems to have been chiefly employed in the Service of Religion. The most frequent Exercise of this religious

[*d*] STROMAT. l. vi.

Rite devolved upon the Women. It appears too, that the Prophets had some Kind of *solemn Movements*, suited to the State and Circumstances of their divine Enthusiasm: This Branch of the *triple musical Alliance* seems (as in other Countries) to have made the earliest Separation. It appears to have been chiefly exercised by the lower Ranks, in the Time of DAVID: And hence it was, that MICHAL, the Daughter of SAUL, like a true fine Lady, despised that Monarch, for exercising a Mode of Piety, which in her Days was *no longer fashionable*.

As to the united or complex Character of *Legislator* or *Bard*, it is remarkable, that this was preserved among the JEWS through a longer Succession of Ages than in any other Nation, from the same Cause which prevented any Progression or Change in the Forms of their Song: For the musical Art being chiefly exercised in the Praises of the true GOD, was in less Danger of being *corrupted*, and therefore not only it's *Utility* was longer *preserved*, but likewise it's *Professors* were in less Danger of being *debased*, than in other Countries where trifling or immoral Applications of the

the

the Art ensued. Consequently, the Rulers of the People could have no Temptation to quit any Part of that Character or Office, which still maintained it's pristine Use and Dignity. Accordingly, we find, that from MOSES down to SOLOMON, during a Period of at least a thousand Years, the *complex* Character of *Legislator* and *Bard* often appeared in the most distinguished Leaders of their State, and from first to last remained unbroken. MOSES, their first great Lawgiver, led the Song of Triumph, on the Overthrow of the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea* [e]: MIRIAM, a distinguished Prophetess, led the female Dance and Choir, on the same Occasion [f]. While the *Judges* ruled in ISRAEL, this complex Office still remained: DEBORAH is an Instance of this Truth: She *judged* ISRAEL; and sung her noble Song of Triumph, on the Death of SISERA and JABIN. We find, that whoever was raised to the Station of a *Judge*, or *Chief*, was commonly invested not only with the *prophetic* but the *bard-like* Character: For we know, that the

[e] EXODUS. [f] Ibid.

Prophets generally sung their prophetic Raptures to the Harp [g]. In After-times, when SAUL was elected *King*, he too assumed at once the prophetic and musical Office. The Songs and bard-like Powers of DAVID, his *kingly* Successor, are two well known to need an Illustration. The same musical and poetic Character maintained it's Union with that of *King*, in his Son SOLOMON; whose *Songs*, we are told, were no less than a *thousand and five*. After him the *complex* Office of *Legislator* and *Bard* seems to have *separated*: The peculiar Causes which had so long upheld it in the *Jewish* State, now began to cease: For *Idolatry* more and more prevailed, *Manners* became *corrupt*, and public Misery and Ruin ensued. The *Prophets* and *Bards* were now no longer found in the Courts of Kings, or among the Rulers of the People: Yet still they continued to throw out the Emanations of prophetic and moral Truth, accompanied with the Enthusiasm of *Song*, in the more retired, and yet uncorrupt Situations of private Life: And such were the



*later Prophets*, whose Writings still remain in Scripture.

As this appears to be a true Analysis of the State of *Poetry* among the ancient HEBREWS ; it will now lead us to an easy Solution of a Fact which hath been regarded as mysterious by some of the Learned ; “ That while most other Nations had their *Bards* or *Poets* ; the JEWS, though their Compositions are uncommonly sublime, never had any *Poets by Profession*, nor even a Word in their Language which denotes the Character [b].” The Principles here given afford a clear Solution of this Singularity. Their *Prophets* were indeed their *Bards* ; and appear to have been invested with all the Dignity belonging to that Office in it’s most honoured State. But as the Almighty GOD, and the great Events of his *Providence*, were the continued *Object* of their *Songs* ; so, the poetic or musical Character was but secondary to the religious ; Therefore the Name of *Bard* was swallowed up and lost in the higher Title of “ *The PROPHET of the MOST HIGH.*”

[b] CALMET. *Dissert. sur la Poésie*, &c.

## S E C T. XII.

*Of the State of Poetry in ancient ROME.*

WE have now traced the Progress of Poetry, through the most remarkable Periods of those various Nations, in which it's *Rise* and *Progress* was *native* and *original*. Let us now view it in it's more *weak*, and *borrowed* State.

The first Flight which *Poetry* took from GREECE was to ROME: For in this imperial City it was not *native*. The Causes of this original Defect, together with the State and Progressions of this Art at ROME, on it's Arrival from GREECE, will make the Subject of this Section.

The only Cause that hath been assigned for the Want of Poetry among the *Romans* in the early Ages of the Republic, hath been "that their Attention to War and Conquest swallowed up all other Regards; and therefore Poem and Melody were of Course neglected." This Reasoning might hold, if these Arts made no more than a mere *Amusement* in the early Ages, as they generally do in the  
later

*later* Periods of a State. But as it appears in the Course of this Dissertation, that they are the *natural* Produce of *savage* Life, however *warlike*; that the Continuance of this *warlike* Character tends rather to *heighten* than *extinguish* their Power; and that the History of human Nature confirms this Truth; We must therefore seek for this peculiar Defect in some other, and more hidden Cause.

There is a Principle which relates to the Establishment and *Character* of *Colonies*, which will hereafter appear attended with extensive Consequences, and which will assist us in unfolding the true Foundation of this Defect.

*Poem*, *Melody*, and *Dance*, being the natural Effects of savage Manners continuing through several Ages, it must follow, that *Colonies* will in general be found to possess them in a very imperfect State; if we regard them as being of *Influence* on the *Manners* of a People. For *Colonies* are seldom sent out, till that early Period is past, when the *Legislator's* and *Bard's* Character are *united* in the same Person. Hence the *Leader* of the new Colony not being possessed of the poetic and musical  
Enthu-

Enthusiasm, can neither have *Ability* nor *Inclination* to instil or propagate these Arts among his Followers, as the Means of a farther Civilization. Thus the first *leading Flame* of *Enthusiasm* is *quenched*: And the inferior Ranks, being busied in the Affairs of their new Settlement, have not that Leisure which the unemployed savage State affords, to turn their Attention on these natural Pleasures: For Colonies of Men seldom depart from their native Country, unless when driven by some Kind of *Necessity*: And therefore must betake themselves, for Subsistence, either to *Industry* or *War*. The last of these was the chief Occupation of the *Roman* State: And thus, not because they were a *warlike* People, but because they were a *needy Colony*, the *musical Arts* which were so *powerful* in *early GREECE*, were so *weak* in *early ROME*.

This Observation will hold true of most other Countries peopled by foreign Nations *after a certain Period* of *Civilization*. Thus *CARTHAGE* was a Colony which went out from *TYRE*: And *Poetry* and *Music*, which were of Weight in the *native* City, were of no Consideration in the *descendant*

*scendant* State. Thus again, the *Irish*, *Welsh*, and *Scots*, are strictly *natives*; and accordingly have a Poetry and Music of *their own*: The *English*, on the contrary, are a foreign Mixture of *late-established Colonies*; and as a Consequence of this, have *no native Poetry or Music*. He who would find the *original Poetry and Music* of ENGLAND, must seek it in WALES.

Here, then, appears the true Cause of this Defect in the early Ages of ROME. So ignorant were the *Trojan* Founders of the Empire in the poetic and musical Arts, that they had not even the first Rudiments of *Song*: For we are told by a learned *Roman*, that when ENEAS brought the Images of the Gods to Shore, “the *Women howled and danced* at the “Solemnity [i].”

The History of the poetic and musical Arts in ROME confirms this general Principle: Their Poetry and Music was always *borrowed and adopted*: Let us trace it's Progress through the several succeeding Ages.

NUMA POMPILIUS first introduced these Arts into the *Roman* religious Ceremonies.

[i] DIONYS. *Hallicarn*, l. i. c. 55.

Had he been a *Native* of ROME, he had been a clear Exception to the Principle here given : But instead of overturning, he confirms it : For he was a retired, philosophic, and illustrious *Sabine* : And the *Salian* Priests which he established, were *Musicians* or *Bards*, who had been brought by EVANDER from ARCADIA into ITALY [k]. Thus, the *Salian* Songs were not *native*, but *transplanted* into ROME.—The Authority of QUINTILIAN confirms this Account. “ These *Salian* Songs (saith “ he) were instituted by NUMA ; and “ prove, that *Music* was not disregarded, “ even in that *rude* and *warlike* Age [l].

We find no farther Progress in the poetic and musical Arts, for many Ages : Save only, that a vague Rumour prevailed in the later Periods of the Commonwealth, that in ancient Times it had been usual to sing the Praises of great Men at Feasts [m].

The next Progression of these Arts in ROME, was the *Adoption* of the *Thuscan* *Sheres* : These, as LIVY informs us, were called in from ETRURIA during a fatal

[k] DIONYS. Hal. l. i. [l] L. i. c. 17.

[m] CICERO de Leg. l. ii.

Pestilence, with a View of appeasing the angry Gods [n]. The borrowed Flame was soon caught and spread among the *Roman Youth*; who by Degrees gave *Voice* to the *mute Action* of the *Thuscans*.

To these the *Atellane Plays* succeeded; being in the same Manner *borrowed* and adopted by the *Roman People* from the *Osci*, a neighbouring Province: Both these, and the *Thuscan Shews*, seems to have been *native* in their respective Districts; and therefore we need go no farther in Quest of their true Origin, than to the untaught Progression and Separation of *Melody*, *Dance*, and *poetic Song*: But on their first Entrance into *ROME*, these dramatic Shews were no longer in their *natural*, but in an *ingrafted* State. The first Idea, then, of *Comedy*, was caught by *Adoption* in this Republic: Here, as in the Adoption of the *Salian Songs*, they were mere *Imitators*. And thus, contrary to the natural Course of Things (as we have proved above [o]) *Comedy* had, by Accident, an Establishment prior to *Tragedy* in ancient *ROME*.

[n] *Liv. Hist.* l. vii. [o] *Sect.* vii.

As it appears that in the first Periods of theatrical and dramatic Representation, it is natural for the *Poet* to *act* a Part in his own Plays [*p*]; so LIVIUS ANDRONICUS, the first known dramatic Poet of ROME [*q*], maintained this natural Union of the *Poet* and *Actor*, which he had received from the *adopted Shews*. But so little were theatrical Representations the Effect of Nature at ROME, and so much were they received as mere Shews of *Pleasure* and *Amusement*, that even at this early Period an unexampled Separation commenced; a Separation more absurd than any that had taken Place in GREECE. For now, “LIVIUS acting his own Play according to the Custom of the Times, was compelled by the People to repeat some favourite Passages, till his Voice grew hoarse: On which, he obtained Leave to substitute a Slave to sing the Poem along with the *Musician*, while he himself performed the *Action* in dumb Shew [*r*].” Thus an *absurd Separation* was established; and continued so established through the suc-

[*p*] Sect. vi. [*q*] Art. 26. [*r*] *Liv. Hist.* l. vii.



ceeding Ages of the *Roman* Empire [s]. Hence *ROSCIUS* himself, of whom the World hath heard so much, was often no more than an Imitator by *mute* Action. We may safely pronounce it impossible that this Separation could have come on, unless the theatric Representations had already degenerated into a mere *Amusement*. When a *Slave* was permitted to *sing* the *Poem*, we may be sure the chief Attention was turned on the *Gesticulation* of the *Actor*. That which in a *sound* State of Things had been *subordinate*, was now become *principal*.

However, the theatrical Shews in this Period seem to have had little Effect; the Manners of the People continuing much the same with those of more ancient Times. After the Succession of a few Ages, the principal Progressions came on; and these arose from their Acquaintance with, and their Conquest of GREECE.

As this Event happened many Years after the poetic and musical Arts had lost their *Union*, their proper *Ends*, and original *Genius* in the *Mother-Country*; so it

[s] LUCIAN *de Salt.*

R

was

was natural, that the *Romans* (now verging towards a Decline of Manners) should greedily borrow and adopt them, in that *separate, imperfect, and perverted State* which these Arts held when the *Greeks* were conquered by the *Romans*. Let us therefore trace them from their first to their last Progressions in *ROME*; where we shall find, that from being of mere Amusement or little Utility, they degenerated by Degrees into Things pernicious.

In the early Periods of *GREECE*, the Poet composed the Melody for his Plays: In the Decline of the Greek States, the Melody was the distinct Labour of another Person [t]. This Separation the *Romans* maintained: A Conduct natural among those who considered these Arts as the Instruments of Pleasure only. The necessary Consequence of this was the gradual Introduction of an effeminate and luxuriant Melody; of which both *CICERO* [u] and *Horace* [w] in their respective Times complain.

In Consequence of these, a new and fatal Separation ensued. The *Player*,

[t] See above, Sect. vi. Art. 35.

[u] *De Leg.* l. ii. [w] *Epist. ad Pis.*

who in the uncorrupted Ages of GREECE was often of the *first Rank* in the Republic, was generally of *slavish Birth* at Rome; and was by Law excluded from the Freedom of the City [x].

A whimsical Change was made in the Form of the *Masque*: For in order to give a *Variety of Expression*, which became necessary as the Fable of their Comedy grew more *complicated*, the two Sides were marked with *different Passions*. “The Father, who is a principal Character in the Comedy, as he is sometimes *pleased*, and sometimes *angry*, hath one of his Eyebrows even, and the other *raised aloft*: and the *Roman Actors* take Care to shew *that Side* of the *Masque* to the Audience which suits with his *present Temper* [y].”

Such were the Progressions in the *Exhibition* of their *Comedy*. With Regard to the *Composition*, PLAUTUS hath left us the clearest Proof, that in the early Periods they had adopted the coarse Manner of the *old Greek Comedy*: And TERENCE remains an indisputable Evidence, that in a later Age

[x] LIV. *Hist.* l. xxiv. [y] QUINTIL. *Inst.* l. ii. c. 11.

they copied (though weakly) the Elegance and Graces of MENANDER.

As we have now seen, that *Comedy* had an *accidental* Establishment prior to *Tragedy* (contrary to the natural Course of Things) from the mere Principle of *Imitation*; so we find, that their *Tragedy* had it's Rise and Cultivation from the same accidental Source, prior to the *Ode* and *Epic*, in a Way no less contrary to the *natural Progression* of these several Species: For we have seen above [z], that the Greek *Tragedy* was the native Offspring of the *conjoined Ode* and *Epic*. But with Respect both to the *Subjects* and *Form* of their *Tragedy*, the *Romans* were mere *Imitators*. For although they had one Species in which their own Great Men were the *Heroes* of the Poem, yet even this was not original, but altogether built on the *Grecian Model*. But farther, we learn from HORACE, that the most approved Subjects were those which were drawn from HOMER'S Poems. He gives this as a Rule to the Poets of his Time and Country; "That to  
" throw the Fables of the *Iliad* into tragic  
" Scenes is a safer and better Practice,

[z] Sect. iv. Art. 17.

" than

“ than to attempt Subjects yet untouch-  
 “ ed.” A Passage which contains the  
 clearest Proof, that Tragedy was now  
 separated from it's highest Purposes ;  
 and that the *great Ends* of this *Poem*,  
 which gave it so much Power in GREECE,  
 were utterly lost to the Roman People.

The primary Application of *Tragedy* be-  
 ing thus little known in ROME, even  
 on it's first Admission ; we cannot won-  
 der that it became a weak and languid  
 Amusement : Especially, among a People  
 whose Manners were now sinking into  
 That Character which tended to give *Co-*  
*medy* the Ascendant, as in the declining  
 Period of the *Greek* States. Thus again  
 the true Cause appears, why *Comedy* was  
 cultivated so much more than *Tragedy*,  
 in every Period of this Republic.

The *Ode* or *hymnal* Species seems to  
 have been equally the Effect of mere Imita-  
 tion ; and no less generally separated  
 from the Ends of *Public Utility*, than the  
*Tragic Poem*. HORACE often declares  
 his Inability to attempt any thing *Great*  
 in this Kind. The general Character of  
 his Odes corresponds much with his own  
 Sentiment: They are always elegant, fel-

dom majestic. His *Irreligion* even *disqualified* him from excelling in the *highest Species* of the *Ode* : For of this, we have seen, *Religion* must be the *Object* : And although there be a Variety of fine *moral* Apothegms, and frequent Allusions to the *public State* of *ROME* ; yet these are always *checked*, and made *subservient* to the Favour of *MÆCENAS* and *AUGUSTUS*. In a Word, they are but *secondary* : *Urbanity* of Sentiment, *Elegance* of *Phrase*, and of *Compliment* to his Masters, were manifestly his *first Object*.

With Regard to the Character of the famed *Roman Epic Poem* ; notwithstanding the inordinate Praises that have been lavished on *VIRGIL'S Æneid*, it may with Truth be affirmed, that neither the *original* nor *legislative* Spirit of ancient *GREECE* appear with any *uniform* Splendor through the Course of this celebrated Work. Elegant in Diction, a Master in Rythm and Numbers, nervous in Figures, majestic in Description, pathetic in tragic Incidents, strong in the Delineation of Character, accomplished in all the *secondary Qualities* of an *Epic Poet* ; yet still *VIRGIL* wanted that all-comprehensive  
Genius

Genius which alone can conceive and strike out a great original Epic Plan, no less than that independent Greatness of Soul which was quenched by the *ruinous Policy* of the Times, and which alone can animate true Genius to a full Exertion of it's Powers in the Cause of *public Virtue* and *Mankind*. Through the first of these Defects, the *Æneid* abounds with false Pictures of refined Manners, with Incidents that are borrowed, unconnected, broken, and ill-placed ; through the second, though here and there the Spirit of *general Legislation* appears [a], yet the great Subjects *peculiarly relative* to the *Roman State*, the *Glories* of the *Republic*, the *Atchievements* of it's *Heroes*, all these are cast into *Shades*, and seen as through a *Veil* ; while the *strongest Lights*, and *highest Colourings* of his Pencil are *prostituted* to the *Vanity* of the *ruling Tyrant*.

LUCAN, in a later Period, seems to have possessed the true Spirit of *Roman Legislation*, in Spite of the terrible Caprices of a remorseless Tyrant, and the Enormity of the Times in which he lived. But he came too late, to obtain a favourable

[a] See Div. Leg. of Moses, B. i. Sect. 4.

Hearing from his Countrymen. *Public Spirit* was now no more: so that LUCAN'S was an Attempt to *raise the Dead*. Besides this, the Period which he chose for the Action of his Poem was so recent, that *Truth* could not *bend to Fiction*: He appears, farther, to have been an *Orator*, rather than a *Poet*. Yet, amidst all these Defects, we must acknowledge, that both in the *Choice* and *Prosecution* of his *Subject*, he was more truly *Roman* and *Original* than the divine VIRGIL.

As to the *Pastoral Species*; in this, too, the *Romans* were mere Imitators. Many of VIRGIL'S Scenes and Lines are no more than elegant Translations from THEOCRITUS. As the mere Principle of Imitation, when incautiously pursued, will always be fruitful of Absurdities; so VIRGIL, while he copied the *external Forms* of the *Sicilian Bard*, lost the *internal Part*, the *native rustic Manners*. And for Want of *drawing after Nature*, hath often made his *Shepherds* talk like *fine Gentlemen*.

Some of the lesser Kinds of Poetry, though all borrowed from GREECE, were imitated more consistently. The *Elegy* was formed and fixed by a peculiar Species of

Ver-



Verfification: And it's Subject being chiefly that of *private Distress*, it easily retained it's original Nature, through all the various Revolutions of Times and Manners.

The *Didactic* was honoured by the Attention and Art of the two greatest Poets of ROME. LUCRETIVS hath given us Proof, that Philosophy may be adorned by the sublimest Strokes of Genius. And were I (like SCALIGER) to build an *Altar* to the *divine VIRGIL*, it should be for the Production of his immortal *Georgic*; which undoubtedly stands in the first Rank of human Compositions.

As it is evident that HOMER was VIRGIL's Model in the *Epic*, THEOCRITUS in the *Pastoral*, and HESIOD in the *Didactic Species*, we may now discover the Reason, "why the same Poet who fell so far short of the *two former* in his Imitations, should so far have excelled the *third*." In his *Epic*, he had the great Task to accomplish, of painting those *ancient Manners* which he had *never seen*; and in his *Pastoral*, those *rustic Manners* which he was *little acquainted with*. Thus the Foundations of his Art sunk under his Genius; and in both Instances a false  
Re-

*Refinement* in Manners became a ruling Defect. But in the Construction of his *Georgic*, he had no such Difficulties to cope with. *Unknown Manners* made no Part of his Subject: For his Subject was the *Tillage* of the *Earth*: Now, in the Words of an ancient Sage, “ One Generation of “ Men passeth away, and another cometh; “ but *the Earth abideth for ever* :” And the general Rules of *Tillage* being easily learnt from *his own Observations* on the Practice of his Countrymen and Contemporaries, he became a *Master of his Subject*: He *paints* what he *saw*: he delivered his *Precepts* at once with *Dignity*, and according to *Nature*: Thus he produced a Poem, in every Respect worthy of his exalted Genius; and while he kept his Model in his Eye, became himself a *true* and a *great Original*.

In one Respect, however, it is necessary here to remark HESIOD'S *Superiority* over his two *great Imitators*; I mean, in the superior Tendency of his Work considered in a *legislative* View, and it's salutary Influence on *Manners*. It hath been observed above [b], that though his

Subject be merely *æconomical*, yet “it is  
 “essentially mixed with Doctrines *religi-*  
 “*ous, political, and moral.*” But the whole  
 Poem of LUCRETIVS is a bold Display  
 of an atheistic System: And some inci-  
 dental Passages in VIRGIL’S *Georgic* are  
 manifestly built on the same *pernicious*  
*Principle.*

*Satire* was not only happily imitated,  
 but improved into a *distinct Species*; and  
 exalted, from an *Ode of vague Inveective*,  
 into a *moral Discourse*, marked with strik-  
 ing Characters; and tending to public  
 Utility, by the severest *Sarcasms* thrown  
 on Vice, and the most generous *Commen-*  
*dations of Virtue.*—It may seem an un-  
 accountable Circumstance, that “when  
 “Manners were degenerating at ROME,  
 “and other Kinds of Poetry had lost  
 “their proper Ends, this *moral Species*  
 “should arise in it’s *greatest Vigour.*” But  
 the Solution to this Difficulty will naturally  
 emerge from a deeper View of the State  
 of Things at ROME. For the *moral Satire*  
 requiring for it’s full Exertion and Com-  
 pletion, not only a *refined and established*  
*Distinction between moral Good and Evil*;  
 but likewise a general *Departure* from the  
*first,*

*first*, and *Proneness* to the *latter*; we see, that on these Foundations, *moral Satire* should naturally appear in it's *Strength*, in a *late* and *declining Age* [c].

To return, therefore, to the decaying State of the poetic and musical Arts in ancient ROME.—As Manners and Principles grew more profligate, along with the inordinate growing Power and Luxuries of the Empire; so the Genius of the *poetic* and *musical* Arts kept Pace with them. We hear little of their being applied to the *Education* of *Youth*, in any

[c] As most of the poetic Kinds (*Satire* excepted) had thus degenerated from their original Character in GREECE, so we shall find that the *Recitation* of them kept Pace with this spurious Birth. We have already seen, that in the more early Periods of the *Greek Republics*, their Poems were *sung* to the surrounding Audience for the important Ends of *Religion*, *Morals*, and *Polity*. In ROME, as in the later Periods of GREECE, we find the *Song* brought down to *Recitation*, and these *great Purposes* swallowed up and lost in the *Vanity* and *Self-Importance* of the *Poet*. Hence we find their best Writers declaring their Dislike to the Practice of *public Recitation*, because Flattery was now become the Food of every reciting Poetaster. The whole Farce and Foppery of this Practice, which was indeed no other than the spurious Issue of the old *Grecian Song-Feast*, is given at large by Vossius, to whom, for Brevity's Sake, we refer \*.

\* *De Imitatione*, c. 7, &c.

Period of ancient ROME. On the contrary ; *Poem*, which in the Days of ancient GREECE had been the *Handmaid* of *Virtue*, was now declared to be the *Bawd* of *Licentiousness* ; and to write *immodest* Verses was held a *blameless* Practice [d]. Thus the Art sunk so low, that the Name of *Poet* was held unworthy a Man of *Age* or *Dignity* [e]. The *mimetic* and *musical* Arts grew not only an intolerable Burthen, but became at length of most pernicious Influence on the State. The Attention to the *mimetic* Art was now carried to a most ridiculous Extreme. CICERO informs us, that the Players practised several Years, before they ventured upon the Stage [f] : That the Actors, in Imitation of the degenerate *Greeks*, gradually awakened their Powers of Speech in the Morning, lest by too sudden an Exertion they should endanger the Voice [g]. They gargled the Throat with a Composition proper for the Purpose : And the Methods of managing and improving the Voice were

[d] *Castum decet esse Poetam : Ipsos Versiculos nihil necesse est.* [e] *Turpe est Senem Versus scribere.*

[f] Cic. de Oratore, l. i. [g] Ibid.

now formed into a separate Science [*b*]. In a Word, LIVY complains, that “an Amusement which was harmless in it’s Beginnings, had now grown to such a Madness of Expence, that the wealthiest Kingdoms were hardly equal to it [*i*].”

In the later Periods the Mischief grew still more intolerable : For now, the serious Arts were cultivated by Few : Nothing was heard but light and effeminate Music : The Singer took the Philosopher’s Place ; the Libraries were shut up ; and the general Attention was turned upon musical Instruments proper to accompany and sustain the Gesticulation of the Actors. The Effects of this Dissolute Taste soon appeared : for QUINTILIAN tells us, that “the effeminate and immodest Music of the Stage had no inconsiderable Part in destroying that small Degree of manly Character which had been left among them [*k*].”

The Evil still increased : So that in the Time of NERO, “The City swarmed with *Pantomimes* : Every private House now became a Theatre ; and the Husband and Wife contended, which should most

[*b*] PERSIUS Sat. I. [*i*] L. vii. [*k*] *Inst.* l. i.

“ successfully prostitute themselves to the  
 “ Favour of the Actors [1].”

There is a Time, when Nature struggles hard to free herself from peccant and deadly Humours. This Time was now come at ROME ; but it came too late : The Body politic was expiring, and was not able to shake off the Evil : The Pantomimes were twice expelled ; but still returned again [m]. At length, the barbarous Nations of the North broke in upon the dying Empire. TOTILA attacked and pillaged ROME : The degenerate Arts sunk with the degenerate City : And the Patrician Ladies, who lately had reveled amidst the Spoils of a subjected World, now begged before their own Doors.

The extravagant Passion of some of their late Emperors for the musical Arts, and these too of the most debauched and profligate Characters, particularly CALIGULA and NERO, is too well known to need a Delineation : But on this Subject, there is one Circumstance which may demand our Regard. We have seen above, that the

[1] SENECA *Nat. Quæst.* l. vii.

[m] TAC. *An.* l. xiii, xiv.

first original Legislators turned their Attention strongly on the musical Arts ; and we now find, that the abandoned Rulers of a decaying Empire adopt them with no less Eagerness : Doth not this Contrariety of Facts seem to shake some of the Principles which we have attempted to establish ? So far from this, that it confirms them : For in both Instances, *Poetry* and *Music* were made *subservient* to the *Views* or ruling *Passions* of those who led the People. The honest Legislators of early Times employed them for the Ends of public Utility ; the profligate Emperors abused them to the Purposes of Licentiousness. Among the former, by a legitimate Use, they became the Instrument of establishing Commonwealths : Among the latter, by a perverted Application, they shook the Foundations of Empire : ORPHEUS drew the barbarous Tribes from Theft, Adultery, and Murder, by his *Songs* and *Lyre* : NERO plundered his Patricians of their Estates to load his *Players* and *Musicians* with Wealth ; and while he exercised and excelled in the *refined Arts*, violated a *Vestal*, and killed his *Mother*.

SECT.



## S E C T. XIII.

*The Conclusion.*

THUS the *poetic* and *musical* Arts sunk along with the *Roman* Empire. —But Mankind, emerging from the Ruins of *Luxury*, *Profligacy*, and *Invasion*, are of a different Character from that of human Nature arising from mere *Barbarity* into *Civilization*. We have traced the natural Progress of these Arts among the latter; but from the *former*, nothing consistent or steady can arise. The Views, Manners, Principles, and Passions of a furious Conqueror, meeting and mixing with those of a subdued and abandoned People, produce such a Compound of dissimilar and contending Causes, as approach in their Effects to the Appearance of mere Chance or Fortune.

But the Circumstance most worth remarking is this, that in such a Period, all the natural Seeds and Principles of the *poetic* and *musical* Arts are lost. The whole *local* Fabric of *Religion*, *Polity*, and *Morals*, is commonly sunk in the general Ruin; and a barbarous Conqueror followed by an enraged Soldiery, who have

left their own Country to invade another, have generally the *Vices* of *Savages*, without their *Virtues*.

Hence the *poetic Arts* could not arise from the Ruins of the *Roman Empire*, but from the ineffectual Principle of *mere Imitation*. They wanted that *native Force* and *Vigour* which had given them so free and full a Growth in ancient *GREECE*.

Such therefore being the Birth of the *modern Poetry* of *EUROPE*; having been the casual Offspring of the corrupted *Roman Arts*, which were themselves no more than partial Imitations of the *Greek*, in their State of Separation and Weakness; no Wonder if the *modern Transcript* be *inferior*, not only to the *Original*, but the *first Copy*.

Here then, for the present, the Writer closeth his Analysis. To pursue this Principle of Imitation through the succeeding Periods, and point out the various Forms of Poetry which it hath produced in different Times and Countries, down to the present Age, may perhaps be the Subject of a future Inquiry.

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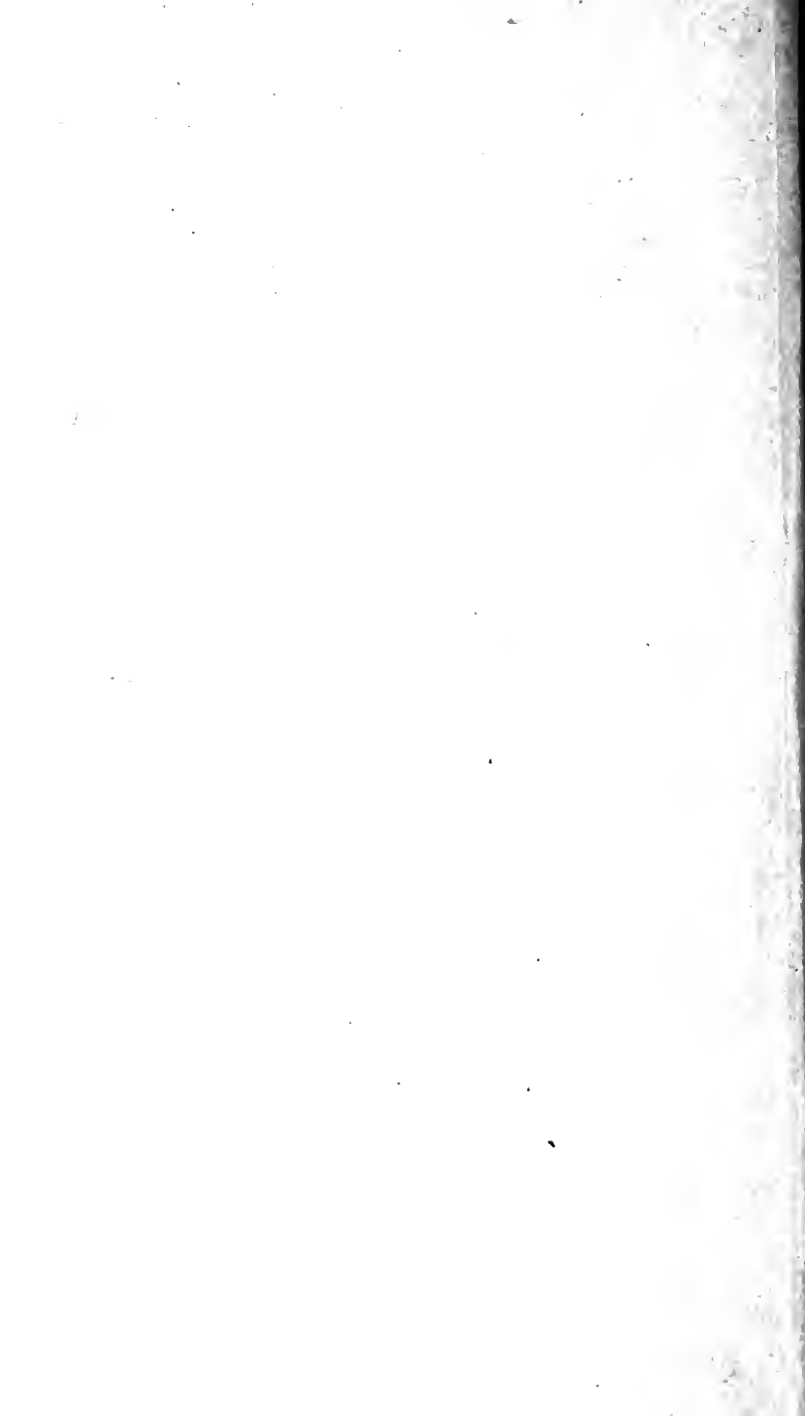
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